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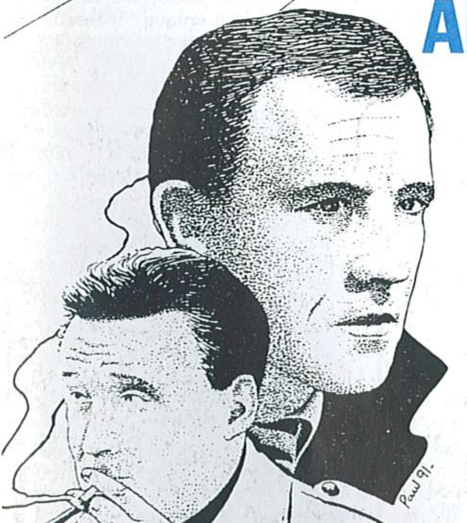
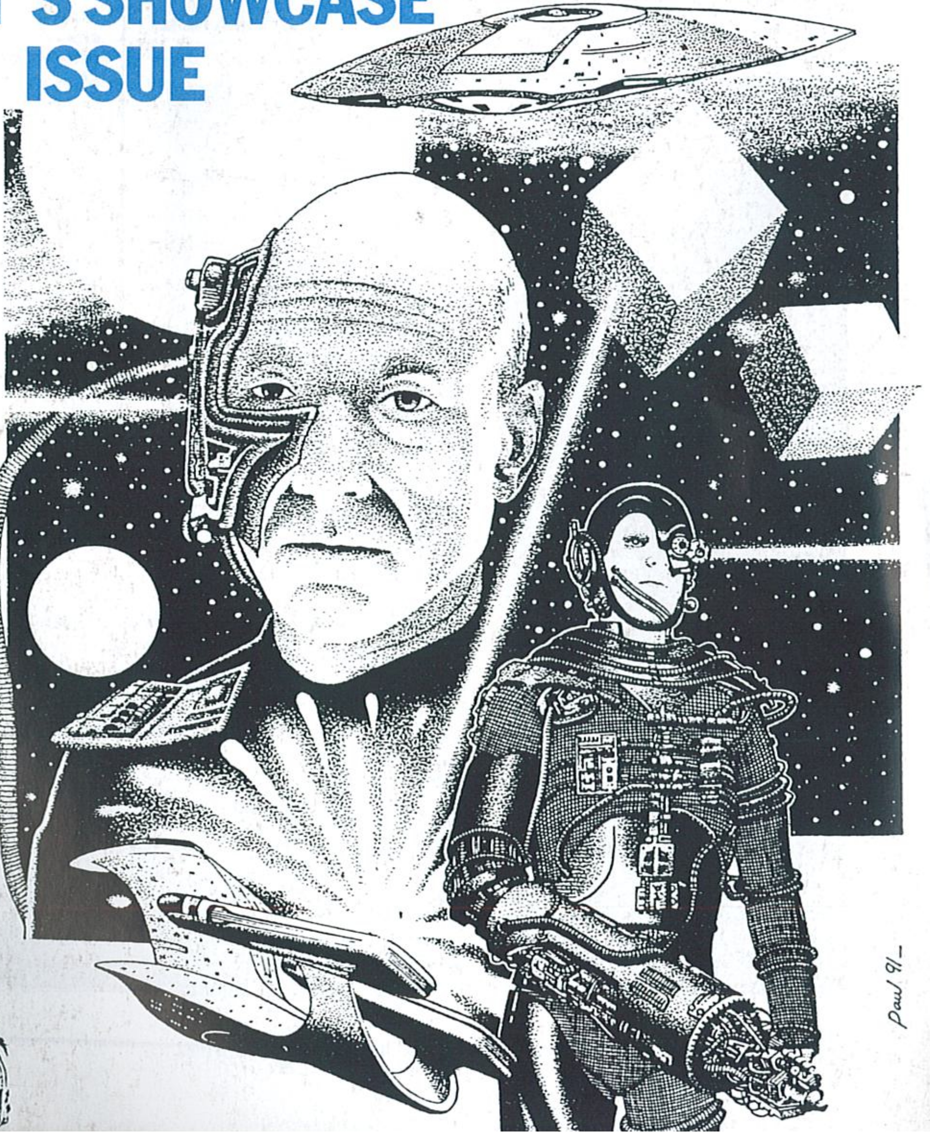
ARTIST'S SHOWCASE ISSUE





D W B, PO Box 1015,
BRIGHTON BN2 2YU

DESPITE a wait of around six weeks between this and the last D W B, this issue should find us back on schedule.

Thanks to Dallas and co. for being so hospitable during my trip to Australia, and while in Melbourne I was fortunate enough to meet up with 60's costume designer Sandra (Alexander Tynan) Reid for a fascinating interview which will appear next issue, together with some stunning previously unpublished photographs. Speaking of next issue, it will be a D W B special for which we invite unsolicited contributions of any kind.

This issue is testimony to the great wealth of artistic talent among our ranks and thanks to everyone who has contributed. D W B receives samples of artwork all the time and simply cannot use every piece received so please don't be too disappointed if we have to return yours.

Finally, we agree, this D W B/DWAS feud is getting silly, but we hope to meet soon with the society to iron out our differences and hopefully reach a formula to enable us to co-exist in peace. Readers will be kept informed of progress. Meanwhile, it was a noble gesture of DWAS to mention in their ad for PanoptiCon XI that D W B would be admitted free this year, probably as compensation for placing our table under a burst pipe last year! However unless a truce can be reached then I don't feel it would be right for D W B to be present at forseeable DWAS events.

Here's to peace!! GARY

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CONSIGNED TO THE FLAMES

YOU PROBABLY MISSED IT in the daily papers. It was one of those news stories of no interest to the tabloids, and of insufficient merit to the heavyweights to warrant more than a couple of paragraphs at the foot of the arts pages.

This June, as part of its drive towards becoming a slimmer, more efficient corporation, the BBC is to close its Script Library at Western Avenue in London.

That simple statement of fact masks a whole host of implications that are as far reaching as they are cause for deep concern. The BBC's remarkable Script Library contains a copy of every 'drama' script broadcast since the start of BBC Television in 1936. Most of the scripts, especially the very early ones, are on microfilm, but even as far back as the historic transmission of H.G.Wells' The Time Machine, in 1949, an original paper script still exists.

Here you will find the only publically accessible copy of Nigel Kneale's The Creature, from which no tele-recording exists. Here you will find all the science-fiction scripts from A For Andromeda to Z For Zachariah, from Year Of The Sex Olympics to The Day Of The Triffids.

INVALUABLE INFORMATION

The Library also keeps other information invaluable to researchers, such as card indices of all transmitted drama, both for the BBC, ITV and Channel 4, under titles and authors.

Providing you get the written permission of the author, the Script Library is also prepared to make copies of these scripts for you or even, if multiple copies are held, let you have an 'original', charging you only for postage, any paper copying and a modest handling fee.

In short, the services provided by the Script Library are second to none anywhere in British television. It is an invaluable tool to students, TV researchers, dramatists and the like; a facility internationally available to anyone, anywhere in the world. Even other TV stations find its reference material useful since very few of them ever bothered to keep such accurate records of their own programming.

Not surprisingly, over the years the Script Unit has been a principle haunt of myself and others from the In-Vision and Space & Time teams in our efforts to dig up background information on **Doctor Who.** Keen readers of Space & Time can probably spot the point where we were first allowed access through the Library's portals, by the dramatic upgrading of the information offered in the Technical Notes sections.

Because the Library keeps all types of scripts - from early rehearsal drafts to final transmission versions - it is sometimes possible to build up pictures of how **Doctor Who** stories evolved as they went through all their production stages. Aside from interviewing writers, producers and directors with good memories, this is the only way of tracing such changes.

Consider **The Ribos Operation** , currently being researched for In-Vision. Most people know it was originally called **The Ribos File,** but how many are aware that Garron was first envisaged by Robert Holmes as an Australian, hailing from a creek in the Outback, "...a mud patch in the middle of nowhere - home to him and a few hundred sheep" as Unstoffe recalls? It's all in the script.

So, too, are the cuts. Much of the initial TARDIS dialogue between the Doctor and Romanadvoratrelundar ("Your name, too long; it's like a Siamese railway station") was chopped before transmission, including a gem of a line from Mary Tamm: "The High Council warned me that you (the Doctor) are prone to being eccentric some of the time, and very iconoclastic all of the time". Again, the priceless gift of words...

So what is going to happen once the Library shuts its doors for the last time in June?

Firstly, the Library's stock of microfilmed scripts is being transferred to the BBC's Central Directory. The good news is that this will, at least, preserve all the **Doctor Who** scripts in one place. The bad news is that this body is purely an internal structure with no research facilities available for outside readers. Neither will it offer any of the script duplication or loan services presently available via Western Avenue.

The BBC maintains it is justified in this action, pointing out that nowhere in its charter is it obliged to offer a research and study archive. "...The BBC has only one job to do - the making and broadcast of programmes".

Most alarming of all, however, is the fate of all the paper scripts once the move is complete. With storage space at a premium, the onus will be on reducing the physical floor area occupied by these 'dead' scripts. In this climate the BBC has intimated it will not wish to retain the paper scripts once the microfilming operation has been completed and audited.

"NAZI-STYLE BOOK BURNING"

Protests about this potential crime have already started rolling in. Authors, script-editors and writers up to the levels of Dennis Potter and Alan Plater have made their comments known to the BBC, with some correspondents even accusing the corporation of contemplating a policy of "Nazi-style book burning".

It is a viewpoint with which I have a great sympathy, and a deep passion to avert, if at all possible. To burn a script is almost to destroy an original work of art. No-one who has seen the scripts for **Marco Polo** has failed to be impressed with them. The prose has a lyrical style to it unlike any other **Doctor Who** story. The words rise from those old foolscap, vellum-like sheets to breathe again the eloquent magic of that serial in a way the Target book miserably fails to do. Imagine all that consigned to the flames...

Perhaps not surprisingly, the man behind the Script Library's closure and move is a name well known to **Doctor Who**'s fans; none other than BBC's C-in-C Mark Shivas, whose name, you might remember, was highlighted in the cancellation crisis of 1985. He is in charge of the task of "rationalising" the Script Library, and it is he who will make all the final decisions about its fate.

Can this unique research facility be saved? Again it must be up to the BBC's true bosses, the license fee payers, to make their voices heard. The closure will undoubtedly affect In-Vision, and that means, in the long run, its readership will suffer.

There are some alternatives to sentencing scripts to a furnace. The British Film Institute is an obvious candidate, possessing already a well-organised research library. True, they might initially shy away from the prospect of taking on such a volume of paper, but here again the public voice can bring pressure to bear.

And what of BBC acredited licensees such as Marvel Comics? They at least would have the space to save the **Who** scripts, and their presence at Marvel would be of inestimable benefit to the Monthly.

For my part, I have already made my views known in writing to the BBC, but for such a platform to become effective it needs the voices of others raised in protest. Yours, perhaps???

Locking away scripts is a crime against history. Destroying them is a crime against nature. Surely you would think the BBC ought to have learned its lesson from the senseless destruction of their priceless film prints and tele-recordings in the Seventies...

J.Jeremy Bentham

AVENGERS SEASON UNVEILED

CHANNEL 4 has unveiled the thirteen episode titles that will comprise the first of its 'Avengers' repeat seasons.

Although the episodes may not now be shown until September, it is anticipated that Patrick Macnee will be available to contribute special introductions for the season held to mark the series' 30th anniversary.

SECOND SEASON PLANNED

A second selection of thirteen episodes is already planned, probably from later seasons.

The first batch are as follows (the episode numbers refer to the transmission order, not recording order, although for season one the two coincided):

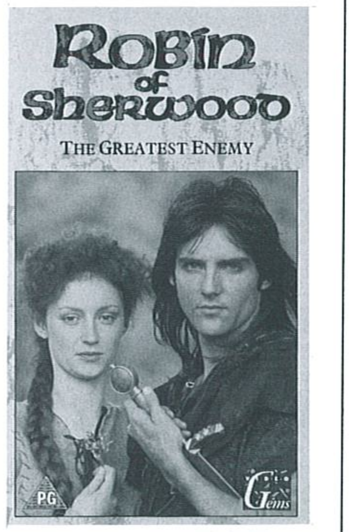
1)	The Frighteners	(Season One, Episode 15)
2)	Immortal Clay	(Season Two, Episode 16)
3)	The Undertakers	(Season Three, Episode 2)
4)	The Nutshell	(Season Three, Episode 4)
5)	Death of a Batman	(Season Three, Episode 5)
6)	November Five	(Season Three, Episode 6)
7)	The Gilded Cage	(Season Three, Episode 7)
8)	Second Sight	(Season Three, Episode 8)
9)	The Medicine Men	(Season Three, Episode 9)
10)	Don't Look Behind You	(Season Three, Episode 12)*
11)	The Little Wonders	(Season Three, Episode 16)
12)	The Wringer	(Season Three, Episode 17)
13)	The Charmers	(Season Three, Episode 23)**

*Refilmed as The Joker (Season Five)
**Refilmed as The Correct Way to Kill (Season Five)

VIDEO NEWS

ROBIN OF SHERWOOD reaches Volume 7 with the release of the final episode in the second season, 'The Greatest Enemy' (R1374).

Out on April 8th, the tape contains only one episode but will initially be available at £7.99. The next release in the series, as yet unscheduled, will contain the first two episodes from Jason Connery's first season as the eponymous hero.



There's lots of movement within the BBC schedules for this year, with changes being made affecting **Doctor Who** and **Doomwatch**. April 2nd sees the release of two new **Doctor Who** titles; Jon Pertwee's swansong **Planet of the Spiders** (BBCV 4491) and the Parisian romp **City of Death** (BBCV 4492), with both featuring sleeve artwork by Andrew Skilleter (see overleaf). **Spiders** will be the first **Doctor Who** title to date to be issued in the BBC's special double-boxed format, previously used for **The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe** and Around The World In Eighty Days last Christmas. Other **Doctor Who** twin-tape sets will be repackaged when current (extensive) stocks of the single-tape sleeves run out.

Volumes 7 and 8 of **Blake's 7** are scheduled for May 7th (a Tuesday since the Monday is a Bank Holiday). The former features the last episode of Season A, **Orac**, and the opening of Season B, **Redemption**, while Volume 8 contains **Shadow** and **Weapon**.

The two **Doomwatch** tapes have also been forwarded to May 7th, with the episodes confirmed as the first episode **The Plastic Eaters** and **Tomorrow the Rat** for Volume 1, and **The Red Sky** and **You Killed Toby Wren** on Volume 2, each retailing at £9.99.

A classic of another kind hits the shelves in JUne, in the shape of The Clangers Volume 2, probably retailing at £7.99. More seriously, June 3rd marks the release of the **Adam Adamant** tape and two special **Doctor Who** releases, each containing orphaned episodes from each of the first two Doctors (see overleaf).

July 1st is a bumper day for science fiction fans, with two more **Blake's 7** videos (**Horizon/Pressure-point** and **Trial/Killer**) and three volumes of the one-off BBC2 series **Star Cops** with three episodes of this nine-part series per tape. Again all are priced at £9.99.

Loosely scheduled for the latter part of the year are two more **Doctor Who** releases in August; the Renaissance Italy-set **Masque of Mandragora** and the multi-Doctor epic **The Three Doctors.** There will be a further four **Blake's 7** tapes before Christmas and two more **Doctor Whos.** Currently scheduled for the latter is a combined double-tape package comprising the linked Tom Baker stories **The Sontaran Experiment** and **Genesis of the Daleks** to cost £19.99 as opposed to £14.99 mentioned last issue, and the long-awaited Gallifreyan espionage tale **The Deadly Assassin** at £9.99, a story that has been available in America for some time now.

Elsewhere, Channel 5 released Volume 15 of **Thunderbirds** (**Path of Destruction/Alias Mr.Hackenbacker**) on March 18th, initially priced at £7.99, although prices across the **Thunderbirds** range will soon be moving upwards to £9.99. Volume 15

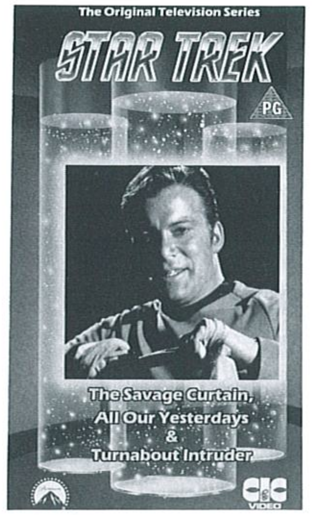
THE FINAL BATTLE
PART 2
15
FROM WARNER BROS A TIME WARNER COMPANY

is the penultimate tape in the series.

Fans of the well-received US series **V** will be interested to learn that Warner Home Video will be releasing four tapes on April 8th. Previously available only as part of a limited-edition boxed set over Christmas '89, the tapes cover the first two mini series and **The Final Battle.** The first volume alone is a staggering 196 minutes in length and, like the others, is £9.99. Obviously Warner Home Video could teach BBC Video a thing or two about providing value for money.

Finally, CIC Video are ensuring that no-one accidentally misses the final two **Star Trek** tapes released on April 2nd. The series is to be repromoted, with shop displays and television advertising campaigns. Fans will also be able to collect tokens giving access to a range of exclusive 25th anniversary goodies in a long-running promotion. The last two tapes are 75/76 (**Requiem for Methuselah** and **The Way to Eden,** VHR 2435, £9.99) and 77/78/79 (**The Savage Curtain, All Our Yesterdays** and **Turnabout Intruder** (VHR 2436, £12.99). Meanwhile **Star Trek - The Next Generation** continues with Volume 10, also on April 2nd, containing the dismal **Coming of Age** and the interesting **Heart of Glory** and Volume 11 featuring **The Arsenal of Freedom** and **Symbiosis.**

Ashley Fisher



The Original Television Series
STAR TREK
PG
The Way To Eden
&
Requiem For Methuselah
STAR TREK
THE NEXT GENERATION
PG
STAR TREK
THE NEXT GENERATION
PG
CIC VIDEO

BRIEFLY...

THE LAUNCH of the Sci-Fi Channel in America has been delayed until the Autumn while the company signs up some major cable companies as well as ensuring that the sets for the production facilities are properly erected. Certain of these facilities have started to be built on the grounds of Disneyworld in Orlando, Florida. 'Star Trek' has been added to the station's ever-growing schedule of science fiction shows.

REMEMBER STARWATCH, which we mooted two years ago as the next biggest home-grown fantasy series since 'Red Dwarf' - until the TV companies suddenly got cold feet over anything sci-fi related? Well Chris Leach, brainchild behind the project featuring/which will feature Jon Pertwee in the lead rôle of Jason Havlin, is holding an intensive one-day exploration into the production of the TV pilot for the proposed series at his film studios in Brighton on March 30th. The cost is £45, and for further details write to Chris at Lionhouse Studios, Queens House, 12 Queen Sq., Brighton BN1 3FD, but hurry, the course is limited to ten people.

WITH WINTER OVER, the convention season is with us again. Ipswich is the venue for a Cult TV Day on April 6th, to be held at the town's Corn Exchange Entertainment Centre and organised by the BFI. Among the attractions are several black and white Cybermen episodes of 'Doctor Who', 'Blake's 7', 'The Avengers', 'Thunderbirds', 'Space 1999', 'Four Feather Falls', 'The Prisoner', 'Red Dwarf' and the BBC version of M.R.James' 'Lost Hearts'. This is the latest in a series of successful collaborations between local councils and the BFI, and once again tickets will be priced under £5 for ten solid hours of entertainment. Sally Knyvette and Sylvia Anderson have been invited as guests, and for more information phone Maureen McWilliams on 0473 255851.

THE AVENGERS Mark One Appreciation Society are organising what will be, surprisingly, the first-ever UK 'Avengers' convention at the Bradford Film Theatre on Saturday May 4th. Special guests and rare archive footage are among the promised attractions with standard tickets at £7 or £4 for society members, students and senior citizens. Details and advance booking available from Bradford Film Theatre, Chapel Street, Little Germany, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD1 5DL.

Finally, Six Of One have announced the dates of this year's Portmeiricon convention as September 6-9th. Send an SAE for details to The Prisoner Appreciation Society, PO Box 60, Harrogate.

THE SLUMP in consumer spending has forced the BBC to postpone its new night-time subscription service - BBC Select - until Easter 1992 at the earliest. Among the service's proposed schemes is a sci-fi station.

GARETH THOMAS and Jacqueline Pearce recently reunited for a sparring session on BBC1's lunchtime magazine show Scene Today.

THE AVENGERS
THE AVENGERS ARE BACK!
TOO MANY TARGETS
A NOVEL BY JOHN PEEL & DAVE ROGERS

'Too Many Targets' by John Peel and Dave Rogers, available from specialist shops, is reviewed on page 17 this issue...

TREK UPDATE

SEASON TWO of 'Star Trek - The Next Generation' will occupy British TV screens for the duration of the summer as the series boldly goes on without a break from Season One.

The first episode of the second season, **The Child,** is scheduled in the normal Wednesday 6pm slot on BBC2. Incidentally, the return of **Quantum Leap** to 9pm on Tuesdays on BBC2 has fallen casualty to the need to quench the public of its unending thirst for Twin Peaks ad nauseum.

*As we went to press it seemed almost definite that **Conspiracy,** the highly-acclaimed and equally highly controversial penultimate episode of the first season of STTNG, would be broadcast by the BBC but in a butchered format, despite sensitivities over the atrocities recently committed by the IRA.

'STAR TREK' APPEARS TO BE CONTINUOUSLY IN THE NEWS THIS ANNIVERSARY YEAR, AND HERE WE ATTEMPT TO BRING YOU UP TO DATE ON ALL THE GOINGS ON WHILE DWB WAS ON HOLIDAY...

*BILL SHATNER and Patrick Stewart recently shared the stage in a special joint show at a Creation Cons event in New York. A special report on this historic panel appears next issue.

*FOLLOWING a few weeks of uncertainty over whether 'Star Trek VI' was supposed to be all but dead came official word from Paramount on February 15th that the project was definitely on. February '92 now seems likely to be the earliest possible date for release, although technically that could still be seen as part of the anniversary year since 'Star Trek' doesn't celebrate its 25th birthday until September. Most commemorative tie-ins, which include an expensive 'coffee table' book from Pocket Books and a four-volume detailed work from another publisher, won't even start to appear before August.

*MACAULAY CULKIN, ten-year-old star of the worldwide cinema hit Home Alone, is being touted to play a stowaway aboard The Enterprise in STVI - The Undiscovered Country. However Paramount are vying with several other companies for his services which, if they obtain, they are sure will turn the final movie in the 'Star Trek' series into a major blockbuster.

THE BUDGET on STVI has been cut several times and now stands at a paltry £25 million. This has necessitated the removal of Kirk's love interest and has also possibly priced ILM out of doing the special effects.

*WALTER KOENIG is complaining that his part is too small, as usual; George Takei reckons he must be the highest-paid actor in Hollywood based on how few days he will be working in the picture, but he is letting it known that Sulu finally gets his own ship; Nichelle Nichols views her rôle in the film as compact but good.

*AN EFFORT is expected to be made to round up anyone who was in the TV series as part of the crew - like Grace Lee Whitney - to be brought on in cameo rôles.

*IT WAS RUMOURED that part of the hold up on the film was because Nicholas Meyer, the writer and director, was furious that Gene Roddenberry and some of the cast were trying to make changes to the script.

*ALTHOUGH Leonard Nimoy has been involved in getting the production going from the start and would like to get a production credit as part of his deal, he is not directing.

*A STORY, though no script, exists that would bring Spock into a 'Next Generation' episode. Nimoy's involvement would depend on his schedule and the money involved, and he is also quite reluctant to be the first of the classic crew to really cross the line into STTNG proper. There is also an entirely separate offer to perhaps direct a STTNG episode, which Nimoy might take up.

*RUMOUR has it that Diane Keaton would like to direct an episode of STTNG. Oh to be trendy in Hollywood...

*WHOOPI GOLDBERG is currently up for an Oscar for her rôle in Ghost, and continues to do STTNG as a labour of love. Patrick Stewart would like to see an episode exploring how the relationship between Picard and Guinan came to be, but that will obviously depend on her availability (not to mention a suitable script).

*THE RETURN of Dwight Schultz as Barclay (from 'Hollow Pursuits') has been filmed...'Q Love', the mooted title for an episode completed on February 15th, has since been changed to 'Q pid'. Jonathan Frakes was injured filming a sword fight sequence on the last day and had to be taken to hospital for several stiches. A three-storey set was built for the episode in which Q returns rather annoyed feeling he owes Picard, and decides to force his hand by setting him down in a different time period with Vash.

*JEAN SIMMONS plays an admiral who comes aboard the Enterprise to investigate what she is convinced is a conspiracy on the ship involving Picard in a future fourth season episode. Incidents going back to the first season, including the Borg episode, will be raked up as she attempts to ascertain Picard's alleged involvement.

*THERE is definitely at least one more Borg episode yet to come, though not necessarily this season... Season Four won't be ending in a cliff hanger this time, although the final story will have follow-up potential.

*A FIFTH SEASON is now definite and a sixth likely, but since new contracts have to be negotiated after the sixth year, and with the cost of each episode now costing $1.6 million, a seventh STTNG season seems unlikely...Patrick Stewart will be back next year - Paramount is keeping him happy by allowing his Shakespeare workshop to meet on the Paramount lot at weekends with a guarantee of no interference and no outsiders allowed in the sessions! In addition he will do a limited run of his one-man Christmas Carol performance in New York next season with Paramount backing.

*ON the production side, Patrick Stewart will be directing the last episode of Season Four (and the 100th overall). Jonathan Frakes is directing the Jean Simmons episode.

*PARAMOUNT considers this to be Patrick Stewart's year for the Emmy, and will be ploughing money into advertising in support of that... Patrick is also in the new Steve Martin film, L.A. Story, which has just opened Stateside.

*RICHARD ARNOLD recently defended his decision to kill off K'Ehleyr (see page 14) saying it had to be done to give Worf sufficient justification for killing Duras. He maintains Suzi Plakston can be brought back as another character, possible as Dr. Selar.

*THE SUN 'news'paper has revealed that scriptwriter David Gerrold has quit the series after a gay orientated storyline he submitted was rejected. The episode, titled 'Blood and Fire', supposedly featured two men in bed together.

THE NEW
STAR TREK NOVEL
BRAD FERGUSON

Available from Titan Books on April 25th, price £3.50.

ERA TAPES EPISODES ANNOUNCED

BBC VIDEO 'Doctor Who' advisor John Nathan-Turner has made his selection of episodes which will comprise the first three Doctors' 'era' tapes.

The first two, featuring the Hartnell and Troughton Doctors, are scheduled for release in June, with a Pertwee tape to follow. Each will consist of three selected episodes from their respective eras with additional clips linked together with specially filmed inserts featuring a surviving Doctor.

The Hartnell tape consists of the first take of the pilot episode, **The Crusade** 3 and **The Celestial Toymaker** 4, with excerpts from **An Unearthly Child** and the Arabic version of episode two of **Edge of Destruction.** The compilation is presented by seventh Doctor Sylvester McCoy.

Rather less inspired is the choice for the Troughton tape. With such gems as **The Evil of the Daleks** 2 and **The Web of Fear** 1 to choose from, Nathan-Turner has instead opted for **The Abominable Snowmen** 2, **Enemy of the World** 3 and **The Space Pirates** 2, together with clips from **The Tenth Planet** 4 (regeneration sequence), **The Web of Fear** 1, **The Three Doctors** 1, **The Five Doctors** and **The Two Doctors.**

The Troughton tape is presented by Jon Pertwee, who also introduces hthe e selection of episodes on his era tape: **Inferno** 7, **The Daemons** 5 and **Frontier in Space** 6. While the latter two are episodes from stories which exist in a mixed format, **Inferno** is held by the BBC in a standard broadcastable form, prompting some doubt as to whether this story will be considered for release in the near future, be it as a single or double-tape release. All episodes on this tape are in colour.

SELF-INDULGENCE

While the inclusion of the pilot episode is to be welcomed on the Hartnell tape, this choice displays blatant hypocrisy on Nathan-Turner's part. This was the same man who told Titan Books, back in 1987, that the pilot episode could not be included in their **Tribe of Gum** scriptbook since it is not part of **Doctor Who's** folklore and should never be available to the public!

While it is hinted that the BBC may be holding back isolated episodes featuring the Daleks and Cybermen for possible future monster tapes, the inclusion of **The Space Pirates** is clearly an example of self-indulgence on Nathan-Turner's part being his first job on **Doctor Who** - as teaboy!

Sylvester McCoy and Jon Pertwee have completed the filming for the inserts and the first two tapes are on schedule for June. (For the rest of this year's **Doctor Who** line-up, see page 3...).

PLANS FOR 1992

BBC Video are keen to see releases from all seven Doctors filling shop shelves, and next year will mark Peter Davison and Colin Baker stories debuting on home video. While several Davison stories are obvious contenders, the first Baker release is likely to be an extended version of **The Two Doctors,** with extra footage from both the studio and location sessions still surviving.

PEARSON OUT, SKILLETER IN

Further to our news in DWB#86 that Alister Pearson had "resigned" from the Timewyrm series, the controversial artist appears to have been ousted by BBC Video in favour of Andrew Skilleter - the former Target artist who also replaced Pearson on The New Adventures series!

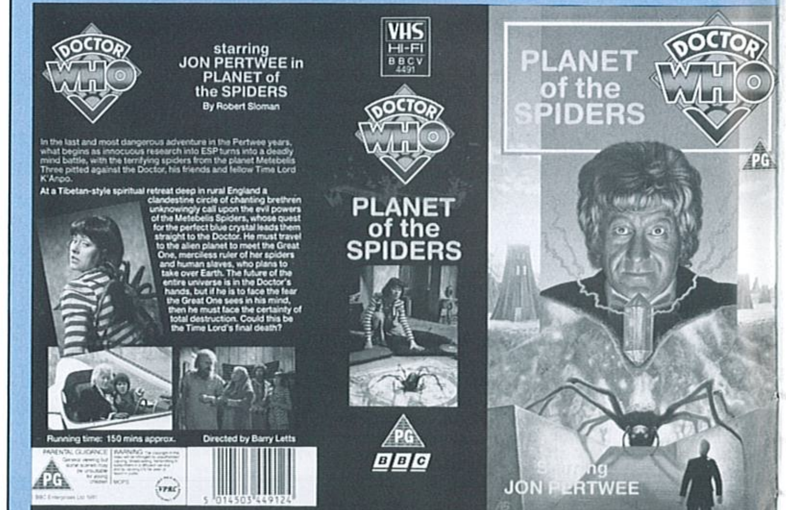
Alister was informed by BBC Enterprises on January 22nd - during his visit there to collect his **Krotons** and **Fenric** paintings (both of which were slightly damaged) - that they would be in touch within two weeks regarding the next two commissions. Having heard nothing by February 11th, he did a couple of sketches based on **Planet of the Spiders** and **City of Death** which he posted the following day.

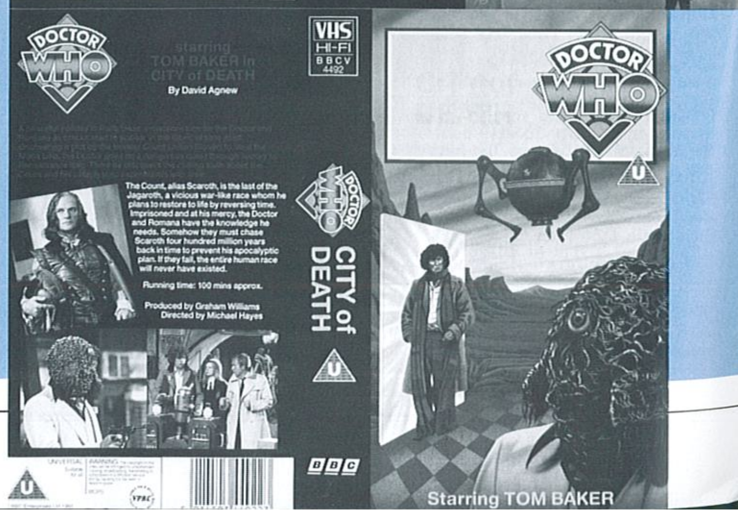
On February 13th, BBC Enterprises rung to announce that, following a "departmental meeting", the decision had been made for a change of style and that Andrew Skilleter had been signed up to do the next two covers (printed left).

Commenting on this apparent snub, Alister told **DWB:** "I was naturally disappointed by their decision; before I came along there was no such thing as Doctor Who video cover artist...and the job that I, in effect, 'created', has been handed to someone else in a rather underhanded way. However, I have to be realistic about the situation, and if the BBC want to commission Andrew, then that is up to them.

"To my mind, it confirms what I have always believed: that the standard of work achieved by some of my rivals simply isn't good enough. As with W.H.Allen's decision over the Timewyrm series, it strikes me as a very interesting 'political' move by the BBC to go back to Andrew rather than approach one of these people who rather fancy their chances as my successor."

Meanwhile Alister is busy providing new covers for reprints of Target books (see next column...).





TIMEWYRM SUCCESSOR UNVEILED

W.H.ALLEN'S 'DOCTOR WHO' EDITOR PETER DARVILL-EVANS HAS ANNOUNCED INITIAL PLANS FOR THE SECOND OF THE 'NEW ADVENTURES' SERIES, TO BE NAMED 'CAT'S CRADLE'.

The authors confirmed for this three-book series are Marc Platt, Andrew Cartmel and Andrew Hunt, a fan writer. The concept of the trilogy is based on an actual script idea submitted by Marc Platt to do with the TARDIS being damaged in a violent way and literally turned inside out with the TARDIS interior turned into a ravaged city. There is also a simultaneous plot concerning ancient Gallifrey before the Time Lords existed. The books are linked via the TARDIS still being damaged at the end of each of the first two books and the Doctor needing various components to repair it.

Andrew Cartmel's story is set in a futuristic American city and concerns the ability to create tiny, super-computers that possess personalities. The book's atmosphere is described as dark and gloomy.

Andrew Hunt's novel is set on an alien planet which has a link through to the Earth. It begins as a fantasy-like book before events start to become more obvious.

All of the New Adventures to date, with the exception of Nigel Robinson's 'Apocalypse', bear some connection with Earth, and Darvill-Evans intends the third series to be set further afield.

PESCATONS SCHEDULED

As BBC Video continue to juggle their release dates, so does Target who are attempting to re-release novels to coincide with their video counterparts. While Peter Darvill-Evans is keen to use the same artwork commissioned by BBC Video, the lack of help from the latter has forced him to commission fresh artwork independently, which is good news for Alister Pearson (see left). Therefore, for example, Target will be re-issuing 'The Masque of Mandragora' complete with new cover, one month after BBC Video release the story with their own newly-commissioned artwork!

Aug: (Reprints) **The Three Doctors** and **Planet of the Spiders** (Dicks), (New release) **Timewyrm 2** (Dicks).

Sep: (Reprints) **Genesis of the Daleks** and **Masque of Mandragora** (Dicks/Hinchcliffe), (New release) **The Pescatons** (Pemberton).

Oct: (Reprints) **Time and the Rani** and **Paradise Towers** (Bakers/Wyatt), (New releases) **Timewyrm 3** (Robinson) and **Gallifrey Chronicles** (John Peel).

Nov: (Reprints) **Delta and the Bannermen** and **Dragonfire** (Kholl/Briggs), (New release) **The Terrestrial Index** (L'Officier).

Dec: (Reprints) **Logopolis, Greatest Show in the Galaxy** (Bidmead/Wyatt), (New releases) **Timewyrm 4** (Cornell) and **Timelord** (Darvill-Evans & Marsh).

All of the above McCoy books are being adapted into the new reprint format but with their existing covers, except for Time and the Rani which will boast a new Alister Pearson cover as opposed to the bizarre photographic one that adorned the now-out-of-print original.

The large format Gallifrey Chronicles will have a cover by Andrew Skilleter and will cover the history of Gallifrey as seen on television, plus speculation on Peel's part as to certain unexplained facts; such as how the Time Lords achieved their regenerative powers. The book will be lavishly illustrated throughout with black and white and colour photographs.

Jean Marc-L'Officier's latest offering ties together an A-Z of all the actors and technical people who have worked on the show, plus a guide to all non-television stories (such as 'The Pescatons' and the Marvel comic strips) and a record of Earth's history based on the 'Doctor Who' universe.

Peter Darvill-Evans and Ian Marsh's contribution will tell you all you need to know to make and play your own 'Doctor Who' adventures based on the role playing game format. The latter two special publications will be in the conventional paperback format.

PLANS FOR 1992

Among the titles being prepared for next year is a third book by L'Officier titled 'Universal Data Bank', 'Doctor Who - The '60s' by The Frame team & 'Monsters' by Andrew Skilleter.

DOCTOR WHO AUCTION "CON"

IAN LEVINE, one of 'Doctor Who's largest fans and ex-advisor to the BBC, was recently contacted by former production associate June Collins and asked to come to the BBC to identify various costumes which were being sorted for a second auction at Bonhams.

Assuming that the money was destined for charity, Levine, accompanied by DWAS executive member Andrew Beech, went along to the BBC warehouse on a snowy day in Fenruary to be greeted by, literally, hundreds of 'Doctor Who' costumes ranging from a mutt's head to the Kroll monster. Levine's job, for which he was offered £300, was to simply identify each costume and its origin (i.e. story) so that the costumes could then be dvivided into lots and a list compiled.

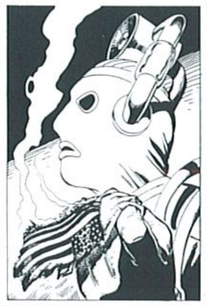
On persistently enquiring as to exactly where the money from the sale of the costumes was destined, Collins - who was organising the costumes for the BBC - finally admitted that it was to raise funds for the BBC drama department. Immediately Levine refused to go any further and told DWB: "I feel conned. All along this has been a way for Peter Cregeen to raise funds for the drama department by selling off hundreds of costumes when not a penny of it will be spent on 'Doctor Who'. The BBC have a nerve, especially Peter Cregeen who has lied so openly to the public about the series' future."

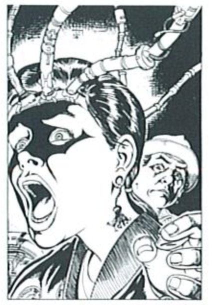
While Andrew Beech was prepared to continue, he was later told by June Collins that his and Levine's services would no longer be required. It is understood that John Nathan-Turner has been approached to take over.

A firm date for the auction has yet to be set pending a firm announcement concerning the series' future being made, though any fan interested in buying costumes should remember that their cash will be used to help fund a department whose cavalier attitude towards us has caused much confusion and uncertainty over the last few years.

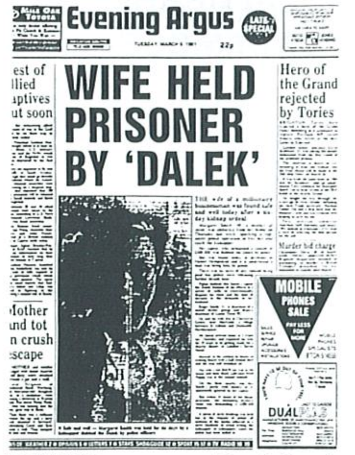
MARVEL's DWM is going from strength to strength these days, not least the comic strip which has a Cybermen story by Andrew Cartmel, 'The Good Soldier', coming up in issues 175-178 (art by Mike Collins and Steve Pini).

Before that there's a 2nd/7th Doctor strip, 'The Chameleon Factor', by Paul Cornell in #174 and a 4th Doctor/Romana text story, 'Pathfinders' by Michael E.P. Stevens in #173.





BRIEFLY...



Evening Argus

LATE SPECIAL

WIFE HELD PRISONER BY 'DALEK'

Hero of the Grand rejected by Tories

Mother and tot in crush escape

Murder bid charge

MOBILE PHONES SALE

NEWSPAPERS were recently full of news about a kidnap case in which the captor was dubbed "the Dalek" by police because of his efforts, in a series of phone calls, to electronically disguise his voice and the tone of menace in his demands. Now in jail, he can also expect a letter from Roger Hancock whose prior permission he failed to obtain.

THORNTON CLEVELEYS Operatic Society is currently rehearsing 'Doctor Who and the Space Travellers' as its 1991 production. Described as an energetic dance show with 40 singers and 30 backstage helpers, new members are still needed for the production which will run at the Fleetwood Marine Hall from June 4th. If you can help, contact Mrs Casilda Jackson on Cleveleys 853695.

SYLVESTER McCOY, Sophie Aldred and David Banks have confirmed their presence at this year's Nebula '91, which promises to be the best yet. See ad this issue...

THE JAMES WHALE RADIO SHOW recently devoted an edition to cult TV. Various appreciation societies, including DWAS, were represented, and a phone-in poll was held inviting viewers to phone in if they wanted 'Doctor Who' brought back. An impressive 3,000+ calls were received, not bad for a programme ending at 2am in the morning!

Jon Pertwee was a recent guest on ITV magazine show This Morning.

ACCORDING to a report in The Daily Mail, £7500 (or 1500 cheques) have been received by the BBC in the "Send the Beeb a Fiver" campaign. Keep sending those cheques and letters!

PETER DAVISON, the actor many believed was far too young to take over 'Doctor Who', has turned 40 - the age Tom and Colin Baker were when they donned the rôle!

You can see the mature Davison in his new ITV series, Fiddlers Three.

NOVACON '91 is the name of this year's major Australian convention to be held in Newcastle (that's NSW!). For details, write to NovaCon '91, PO Box 191, Beresfield, NSW 2322, Australia.

CENSORED BY THE "UNDEMOCRATIC" DWAS

Brian Gallagher, London W12 (3-5-91)

I WOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL if you would allow me some space in your letters section as I feel that I have been done a wrong by the editor of CT, Martin Kennaugh, presumably on the behalf of the DWAS 'executive'. As I have effectively been barred from replying in CT, DWB would seem to be my only platform for some form of redress.

As members of the DWAS will know, I have had correspondence published in CT critical of the DWAS's performance both in the recent past and the present, which has elicited response not only from the editor(s) of CT but also from members of the exec. These replies were usually inadequate as well as slightly distorting what I actually wrote. My latest two letters were both published in the February CT, the first of which was unedited complete with a reply from the editor which ended with the comment that correspondence concerning 'DWAS democracy' (a possible solution to the problems of the DWAS) and complaints "which are not relevant to the current society" is closed. Apparently, discussing the exec's mistakes in the recent past and suggesting how they are relevant to the present (i.e. the possibility of the same mistakes happening again) is simply now not on! However, what I am particularly concerned about is the treatment of my second letter, all my criticisms/suggestions regarding the present DWAS exec of which were edited out, thus giving the lie to the claim that CT will publish critical letters concerning the current exec. Still, this didn't stop the current editor from replying to a couple of my criticisms, which of course gives him even greater leave to distort what I wrote. Ironically, in his reply he denies that the DWAS does not operate a censorship policy!!

The edited points of my letter he did not reply to concerned the lack of general news in CT; a discrepancy in what two members of the exec. stated in replies to my previous letters concerning the financial affairs of the DWAS; a suggestion that the DWAS should combine its petition campaign with the Whonatics' petition campaign; and a request that the exec. enquire of the BBC whether it will be broadcasting **Doctor Who** on its forthcoming subscription service. Mr.Kennaugh considers all this to be too "unpleasant" to publish. Furthermore, he goes on to denigrate my letter, claiming that it is "the most vitriolic and unpleasant to date", that my arguments "make very little sense" and that I am unable to make my case in the letters I have already written. This is all rather odd. The letter is actually the most tame I have written to CT, it **did** make sense (why else would Mr.Kennaugh 'waste' nearly two pages of CT printing them and subsequently answering some of my points?) and, as for not making my 'case' in my two letters already published, well, the reason I continued writing was **because** of the inadequate answers given to me by the various members of the exec! Indeed, there is a lot more I could write about Mr.Kennaugh's replies to my letters, but questioning the exec's replies, it seems, is no longer permissable. Judging by the treatment of my letters in the February CT, it seems that I have been effectively banned from criticising the exec, at least in their own magazine, and presumably this extends to other DWAS members too.

The whole point of my correspondence in CT was an attempt, as an 'ordinary' member, to try and dispel the bad blood in fandom concerning the exec's running of the DWAS, but they don't seem to be interested in reasoning things out. The DWAS exec must change its ways, and soon. It would seem that a fan club run by Marvel may be in the offing. What then for the "official recognition" of the DWAS? Indeed, what then the future of DWAS?

ED: The correspondence between Brian and CT's editor is reproduced here. Only last issue DWB announced that it had severed links with the DWAS (which were at an all time high under the reign of the current teams predecessors) because of what we saw as a dangerous return to the society of egos and an unwillingness to reason. This incident appears to be a sign of this problem manifesting itself within the pages of CT itself, but we would be interested to hear your views on the subject. All letters received will be given equal treatment and see publication.

THE FINAL WORD ON DWAS DEMOCRACY

I feel that I have to reply to the various comments on my letters that have appeared in CT.

First of all, Mr O'Mahony's letter in the October CT. His comments were both childish, and ill-informed (`tenuous connections', eh?). He seems to be aggravated that I had the temerity to question Socialism. Still, members must have been amused if they had scrutinized what he said about my original letter, and the letter itself. He describes my claims as being `ridiculous' and `ludicrous'. In my letter I referred to Labour governments leaning on broadcasters, the existence of Marxists terrorists and their sympathizers as well as the collapse of left-wing regimes in the world. I thought these were facts not claims. To refer to them as ludicrous and ridiculous is unbelievable. What kind of cocoon is Mr O'Mahony living in?

I'm not quite sure what Nathan Cooke's point was (letters, October). He mentions THE GREEN DEATH as being a left-wing Who, although I haven't seen it. I was under the impression that it had a green political stance. Socialism's record on the environment has been somewhat miserable to say the least.

Now for the DWAS. Back in the September CT, John A. Collins referred to my original letter as being `biased'. This may have given the membership the impression that I am involved in some rival organization or have some personal grudge against the DWAS Exec. Let me assure the membership that this is not the case. I am merely an ordinary member trying to obtain a better deal from the DWAS Exec.

The previous editor wrote in his comments after my letter in the October CT that I was a `touch naive' in my assumption that Democracy would lead to an influx of members which could exceed 4000. Not at all. In 1986 the membership reached 3,400. It then started to decline as the service the DWAS was offering started to decline. The service declined because of the way the Exec was formed and run, i.e. incompetently. Therefore if a new system were introduced, such as democracy, the service would improve, and therefore the membership would rise again. The potential members are there for the taking: previous members, the readers of DWM, and the new generation of fans. The appalling reputation the DWAS has will prevent any great expansion of membership, and the only way to change any reputation is to change the DWAS. The service the DWAS offers does seem to be improving, but I'm afraid it is only a matter of time before errors are made again, and the membership will fall again. Incidentally, I have never implied that the reason DWAS does not publish accounts is because of `some sinister ulterior motive', but because the accounts may not be handled well, as proven by the VAT problem. As for the `disturbing attitude from DWAS which I do not see elsewhere in fandom', well other fanzines, such as DWB do genuinely seem to listen and act upon what their readers want. The DWAS may occasionally listen, but very rarely does it act.

The comment about not wanting to hear what the Society was like a year ago because there is a new administration, interested me. It seems that Exec members can make serious errors, and then leave, safe in the knowledge that the incoming Exec members will not say anything because it does not concern them – a most convenient arrangement.

Ian Cook's comments in the November CT were interesting as well. Ian Cook may not have been in a clique, but most Exec members, past and present, no doubt are. I too was interested to read about the 1988 VAT problem, as it was revealed in the much reduced March 1988 CT. To my mind this was a problem in 1988 directly caused by VAT difficulties, therefore, it was a 1988 VAT problem. As for the Exec commenting in CT not DWB, well, it was a pity that the Exec didn't comment in CT last year. There were plenty of complaints levelled against the DWAS and they seemed to be aired in DWB because the Exec refused to answer these complaints in CT and the hope was that the Exec may reply in DWB. Which of course it didn't, as the Exec does not seem to recognize anything in fandom except for itself, despite the fact that DWAS is no longer the centre of fandom.

It was pleasing to see a confession regarding the mismanagement of the old book club, although not in the detail I hoped for. But supposing the same mismanagement occurs with the appointment of the new Co-ordinator?

I was somewhat surprised that there was no mention whatsoever of the `Day of Action' occurring on November 30th. I learnt at `Cybercon II' that this was because you felt that the BBC would regard us as lunatics. Fine, but what exactly is the DWAS doing? Nothing, presumably. An alternative course of action would be a demonstration, peaceably making our case in a positive manner (as JNT, at the Con, suggested). CT should have published news of the `Day of Action' and then told us why we should not be involved. To ignore it as if it didn't exist, despite the vast majority of members knowing about it through other means, only makes the Exec look somewhat foolish and ridiculous. No doubt some members may not bother renewing their membership because of this attitude.

Brian Gallagher, Hammersmith, London.

I find this desire to equate the DWAS (or indeed any fan body) with a democratic nation (yes Brian, I know you've not said as much, but since nations are the best example of democracies, the comparison is obvious) somewhat absurd. Surely the situation is more obviously equated with a business. When positions (or `jobs') become vacant, they are advertized. People write in (in their two's and three's – and that is a serious statement on the number of people who do apply for Exec positions), a certain amount of vetting takes place from those letters, and then applicants are interviewed, with the person judged most suitable gaining the position. Surely this is the most sensible way of conducting the proceedings? The members of the Society Executive are the people who best know how much work is involved (and there is, I can assure anyone in any doubt, a lot of work involved in all Exec positions), and are thus surely best able to judge whether a person is suitable and capable of doing the work.

I'm sorry, but I cannot see people flocking to join the Society, just because "DWAS BECOMES DEMOCRATIC" – it seems a bit of a daft assertion to me! Surely people are more likely to join if they know what they're getting, and are aware that it is an improvement of previous years; the quality of CT and the success of PanoptiCon surely are more effective indicators of the state of the Society, than any change in the structure of it!

If, Brian, you're still desperate to know every detail about every little mistake made in the past by previous Exec members, feel free to write to them, enclosing SAE's and spare stamps, and we'd be delighted to forward your letter(s) to the relevant persons (whether they'll answer is up to them, of course). Why should present Exec members be held responsible for mistakes made in the past - especially if they've worked hard to rectify them? As has been said, repeatedly, in recent months, the present Exec is a different one to that of a couple of years ago. I have no idea what you're talking about in this statement that the Exec `listens but rarely acts' (unless you're talking about Democracy, of course!), apart from the fact that we actually receive very few comments on what readers want, where applicable we do listen. I don't think we've had any suggestions about what to do with CT (apart from `Keep up the good work'); the recent reappraisal of Local Groups followed various letters and comments received; the campaign launched in December (`Nothing, presumably') for the return of the programme, took two notably suggestions made by members into account (namely timing and format). PanoptiCon 90 was based very heavily on the relevant results of DWAS 90, in terms of location, size, guests, etc., and has received acclaim from more or less every quarter, so I would have to reject utterly your statement! If we get constructive and practical suggestions we act on them.

As for cliques, there really isn't one! As Colin said in December, he didn't know any of the Exec before he got the position. I'd spoken no more than a handful of words to any previous Exec members before I started helping Mike last year. Ian you mentioned - that's nearly half the Exec, who never knew each other before being involved with the Society!!

Right, what else? Oh yes, your confident prediction that the Society will fall apart in week or so without the sudden imposition of democracy! Be serious Brian! The Exec meets once a month, at each meeting all members of the Exec are required to give a report, these are now of sufficient detail to ensure that all areas are running properly. We are all intelligent people pulling in the same direction, well able to make sure the Society runs smoothly.

It must be said, Brian, that I've not found any of your letter's in any way constructive. DWAS is not going to change the way it forms the Exec, until someone persuades the Exec that it is actually beneficial to the Society; I have found none of your arguments persuasive - and since only three people applied for the post of Co-ordinator, two of them on the Exec!, and not one of the applicant's had any desire to see democracy in the Society, it's not going to be soon!

I have to say that I agree with Gavin French's comments last month that this type of `bickering' does not provide a good advert for fandom - especially since all the complaints you've levelled, relate to the past, and don't apply anymore! There is nothing wrong with criticizing the Society, but for things wrong with it now, not things which were put right eons ago! I feel that this debate (though to describe it as such is something of an exaggeration since there have been few really constructive arguments presented) is unlikely to progress further, and I will not be printing any more letters on the subject of `DWAS democracy' or which feature complaints which are not relevant to the current Society; correspondence on this subject is therefore closed.

As a post-script to the above, just as this issue was going to press, I received a further letter from Mr Gallagher. In this he did apologise for his comments about the Society not doing anything about the return of the programme (following December's CT). He further went on about the `Day of Protest', saying that the reason it was not covered in November's issue, was through some strange censorship policy of the Exec, and through some anti-DWB stance the Exec has (apparently) had since 1983 – neither is the case, Brian. I feel the comments I made in December explained very clearly why it didn't appear in CT, and if we had any `anti-DWB' stance, we certainly wouldn't allow that magazine advertizements (as appeared in May's CT last year), or the inserts which appeared with the last issue. You yourself describe such a stance as `somewhat petty', which I would wholeheartedly agree with, which is why there isn't any such feelings against DWB.

The most recent letter from Mr Gallagher is, I feel, his most vitriolic and unpleasant to date; his arguments, on the subjects mentioned above, make very little sense, and are based solely on a strange misapprehension of the way the Exec spend their time on DWAS affairs. Since I believe that if Brian cannot present his case in the three letters of his so far printed (in full) – taking up nearly two full pages of letters with his remarks and those in the reply – and because I found them generally unpleasant, I have not printed his comments on the DWAS, but rather have mentioned them above. Below are his comments about the BBC's commercial ventures. (this has also been slightly edited)

I was somewhat surprised at the Head of BBC Enterprises, Mr James Arnold-Baker, coments on `Right of Reply' of 1st December. Perhaps he was unduly aggravated by fans phoning him up, but he claimed that `The property is an old one, its had its day, and is no longer commercially viable.' We all know Doctor Who is the BBC's number one money maker, and if Doctor Who is not `commercially viable' then no other British series can be. Surely Mr Arnold-Baker knows that Doctor Who is `commercially viable'? Or is this another BBC Dirty Trick?

Finally, in the December CT Jason Stevens mentioned the possibility of the ending of THE DEADLY ASSASSIN part 3 existing on VHS (albeit unbroadcastable). I believe the BBC do hold a VHS copy, but I also believe there is a possibility that they hold a broadcastable copy. The US video of THE DEADLY ASSASSIN apparently contains this scene, so it is possible that a broadcastable version exists on American prints of the story which the PBS stations use. Although the scene would be NTSC 525 line, I don't think this would be particularly noticeable if it were tacked onto a 625 line PAL copy.

●●●

Gary Clyde, London NW1 (7-2-91)

I **was interested** to read the correspondence between John A. Collins (DWAS Co-ordinator) and yourself as printed in January's CT. Reading between the lines, the overwhelming impression is one of the DWAS exec. passing the buck. Surely, as Co-ordinator, John must accept responsibility for the failure to bring the "mass" phone-in to the attention of British fans en masse? Had CT's 1,500 readers been aware of the campaign, I am certain the overall response would have been far greater.

John blames CT editor Martin Kennaugh for the lack of coverage - do these guys actually **talk** to each other? Surely, with a major campaign aimed at saving **Doctor Who** on the cards, the exec. should have discussed its coverage and how to approach it? OK, so they didn't approve - why not highlight it anyway and express their concerns at its effectiveness in the same article? If DWB is to be believed (and why should we doubt it?), the campaign had the verbal support of virtually everyone, DWAS included, yet they all seem to be washing their hands of it. You can bet that had it been a success Mr.Collins et al would have been patting themselves on the back for helping to spearhead the whole thing.

JNT's comments, also, are hardly relevant. With his new position at BBC Enterprises just secured he is hardly likely to lend his name to a planned jamming of the Beeb's switchboard now, is he? And John Collins' comment about misusing our parents' phones made me squirm. A truly patronising statement worthy of the BBC itself. Just what is the average age of the DWAS membership?

Anyway, while the months roll by and the bodies who look to the BBC before putting pen to paper decide what action, if any, to take, DWB can actually stand up and say it **tried** while there was still time. Perhaps the final word should go to the DWAS itself, and Colin Griffith's comment in January's CT: "Everyone please, please, just for once, forget your DWASapathy, and let's show some solidarity..."

Nuff said.

ED: The Day of Action had the support of the DWAS primarily via their convention organiser, Andrew Beech, who sanctioned the goahead for the distribution of the 'Day of Protest' leaflets at PanoptiCon X.

Alan Dobbie, London N22 (12-11-91)

In mid-1989 I joined DWAS, eager to know more about the programme that I've loved for years, and it was through them that I became aware of DWB, The Frame, etc..., but that is where the joy of being in DWAS ends, I'm afraid to say. Whilst I shall be renewing my membership in a couple of months, I will do so with some reluctance for I am fed up of reading about their internal politics. The idea of DWAS, in my view, is to serve people who like **Doctor Who** and want to see it continue, and to ensure that the BBC gives value for money. Sad to say that is not happening on many counts - the BBC must be laughing!

Whilst writing I feel that I must say something about the phone-in. I had mixed feelings about it, however, it would have been bigger, perhaps better, if DWM and DWAS had backed it. Well done DWB for backing the Day of Action; I just sincerely regret those who took part who were abusive. It does not help return the programme any quicker, nor does it show fandom in a good light. However, any campaign **must** be backed.

Raymond Twatt, Glasgow (5-3-91)

Just to let you know, the Glasgow Local Group was one which split away from DWAS several months ago. It's nice to see people standing up to the shoddy service which they (barely) provided, so I was pleased to see that you had broken links with them. As a so-called "officially recognised by the BBC" body, they are (were?) as efficient as a chocolate tea pot, and our group has not suffered one bit from our action.

ROUND-UP OF VIEWS ON DWB#s 85 & 86

Steve Rogers, Suffolk (11-2-91)

I completely disagree with David Darlington's letter criticising the recent **Moonbase Photonovel** issue (ref: DWB#86). For me, #85 was the best of DWB's 1990 run - a great issue to finish the year with. The highlight was the Photonovel, presented in the best way to display the photographs. It would have been nice if some could have been printed larger as in the **Power of the Daleks Photonovel.** So what if half of the episodes exist? We, the average fans, will never get to see them. Showing the wealth of photographs DWB published on just a "few pages with a short synopsis" would have been "a waste of space"!

David then goes on to say that a couple of paragraphs in the **Wiseguy** feature didn't "make sense". Well, I re-read Ian Levine's article and couldn't find **one** paragraph that didn't "make sense". The only criticism you could level at it would be the repetitiveness concerning relisting of characters. I would just like to say, at this point, that Ian's article did prompt me to watch **Wiseguy** and it's now part of my regular viewing, although I don't really see it as a fantasy show. Yes, it has larger than life characters, and Vinnie has had hallucinations/dreams, but all these exist in the 'real world', nothing fantastical.

Finally, regarding David's letter, if you didn't want to know what the extra scenes in the **Fenric** video were, why read the feature? I haven't read it, I will wait till I've seen the video, then read it to see if I've spotted all the extra scenes and then treat the article as a great reference piece. Also of note in #85 was the interesting Lalla Ward interview. One or two questions were a bit iffy, but all in all a very pleasant read - a pity this lovely actress in no longer gracing our screens.

DWB#86 was what all post-Christmas issues should be like - packed! Packed not only with a large variety of features but also a ton of news, and not one space filler in sight!

The issue's highlight for me were the **Blake's 7** video reviews. Having never really been able to get into the series first time round (the only season I saw in full being the disappointing 4th), this article has prompted me to give it another go by at least buying the first tape, although I can't understand why the Beeb has released four tapes all at once - do they really believe people have £40 to spend on videos a month?! The only thing I didn't like about #86 was David Darlington's letter...

Sean Gibbons, Co.Donegal, Ireland (21-1-91)

I cannot agree with David Darlington's view on your **Moonbase Photonovel.** The photos have printed very clearly, better than you would get off a fussy VHS videotape, and of course it features episode 1 and the story's highpoint, episode 3. Admittedly the story may appeal more to those "oldies" who first saw it in its original context as a weekly, unfolding new story, nonetheless, I consider both photonovels (so far) as among the very best items DWB has ever produced, the transcripted dialogue and photos complimenting each other perfectly. Usual 'flaws' aside, **The Moonbase** itself is a classic story; the first to feature the revamped (and exciting) Cybermen, Troughton, a host of interesting sounds from Brian Hodgson, and a clever and well-constructed storyline and script from Davis and Pedler. In fact, inspired by your Photonovel, I could write pages, based on my own subjective viewpoint, on how enjoyable and stimulating this serial was and still is to this day.

Paul Vella, Cardiff (1-2-91)

I enjoyed the **Moonbase Photonovel**, which I think is a more valuable item to collect than any of the Titan Scriptbooks and also less expensive. Also, congratulations are due to Andy Walker for providing such a stunning cover (although I'm not sure about the human hands!).

Richard Thomas, Cheshire (15-1-91)

I don't agree with David Darlington about the **Moonbase Photonovel**, afterall, how many fans have access to pirate copies of the two episode that do exist, and also these two episodes are almost certainly never going to be shown by the BBC or released on video unless the other two turn up.

May I also say how much I enjoyed **DWB#86.** after a hard day's work plus three hours at night school it was nice to be able to settle down to a good read of DWB. The cover picture from **The Macra** >

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THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES - TWO DAYS OF THRILLING ENTERTAINMENT

Terror was excellent and I would like to see more off-screen stills printed this size in the future.

Simon Moore, NSW Australia (12-1-91)
I am most distressed at DWB#85. The reason - **The Curse of Fenric** extended video information. It should not have been printed. Although I am lucky enough to have the willpower to overcome the temptation to read it, I know that many other people will read it eagerly. It would have been a much better idea to print the information **after** we had all seen the video. I know that your reply will be that the information is there so that people can read it if they choose to. However, I feel that you would do a great justice to all fans by with-holding such information - basically, to save people from themselves. I am sure more enjoyment will occur at the time of viewing when a few 'missing' seconds are discovered, rather than to know what will be there and what won't. With the lack of any new material recently, and the unlikely event of further such extended releases, I feel that such a pleasure would be quite unique. I will experience it. Unfortunately few others will.

On the subject of future BBC Video releases, I am pleased to hear of hints of 1980's stories for the 1992 schedule. After all, we are beginning to scrape into "okay" and even "yukky" stories, what with **The Krotons** and the proposed **The Chase** and **Robot**. Why are the real classics of these eras, such as **The Aztecs, The Sea Devils** and **The Seeds of Doom** not released before them? I know that **Robot** is a post-regeneration story, **The Krotons** is the last complete Troughton and **The Chase** is, well, **The Chase,** but they are all quite dreadful. Believe me, after having **Robot** repeated nine times, a certain loathing for this piece of seventiesness begins to appear. I mean, a badly-CSOed robot doing a King Kong impression through a model train set...

Andrew Green, Sheffield (15-1-91)
DWB#85 was another excellent issue, especially the photonovel section, which surpassed the **Power of the Daleks** one. The Lalla Ward interview was most refreshing and made a change from the usual interviews, as did the Paul Darrow one (particularly his remarks on **Timelash!**). One article which I didn't find very interesting was the one on **Wiseguy** - surely it would have been better spread over two or three issues, but **five** pages in one issue was surely overdoing it!

The news that **Doomwatch** is to be released on video is good news, but, if it still exists, how about **The Quatermass Experiment**? It is fondly remembered (by my mother at least!) and surely could be released in a format similar to the **Quatermass and the Pit** series.

John Hall, Massachusetts, USA (13-2-91)
As a long-time reader of DWB (since #23), I have never noticed an article which I've considered inappropriate for the magazine, until #85. I found it hard to believe that the now-cancelled **Wiseguy** was mentioned at all in DWB, much less as a feature article with episode guide. I realise **Wiseguy** is considered a cult show, and I myself have watched it on and off and enjoyed it, but, for the most part, its connections to telefantasy are tenuous at best. I wholeheartedly support your covering American telefantasy; I usually find Kathleen Toth's **STTNG** articles spot on and generally more entertaining than similar ones in Starlog. To be honest, I was surprised you didn't cover a show more related to telefantasy, such as **Quantum Leap, The Flash** or the revamped **Dark Shadows.** Even Twin Peaks has a more solid claim on the label of telefantasy! Failing American telefantasy, I would like to see DWB have more articles about **Red Dwarf.**
ED: *I should point out that the **Wiseguy** feature in #85 was independently funded, and had it not appeared then the issue would have been 48 pages in length instead of 52. The author, Ian Levine, did go to great lengths to explain why he felt its inclusion was justified in a telefantasy magazine.*

Glenn Curtis, Kent (20-1-91)
May I say how pleased I was to see an episode guide to **Wiseguy** in DWB. I have always rated this programme as one of the best television series. How about a guide to Magnum, which also featured some fantasy episodes?

Michael Scholey, West Midlands (27-1-91)
Many thanks for DWB#86, an interesting and informative read as ever. I have only one real complaint about the issue, that being the letters page which has become extremely bland and lack-lustre in recent months. Once a controversial and often highly amusing platform for people to air their views, it was frequently among the most entertaining features in your magazine, but recently the range of subjects covered appears to have narrowed severely. I realise that with the current situation regarding the future of **Doctor Who** that there is precious little for readers to comment upon, but perhaps you could alleviate the situation by means of some kind of a forum inviting people to write in on specific topics.

However, apart from the letters page I feel that #86 is the best for quite a while, especially the news section which contained two particularly intriguing items. Firstly the news that **The Sontaran Experiment** is to be included on the 2-tape **Genesis of the Daleks** release. This is certainly excellent news, and although I haven't felt quite so strongly about BBC Video's double-tape policy as many others have, it is nice to see them listening to the fans for once. Secondly, I was pleased to hear that Andrew Skilleter has returned to the world of **Who** novels to produce the cover for 'Genesys'. While I have the deepest respect for Alister Pearson's artistic skill (he is highly competent at capturing likenesses and has produced some very striking book and video covers), I have never believed thah he is the right man for the Timewyrm series since, in my opinion, his designs lack the imaginative flair necessary for original fiction (just take a look at his 'Missing Episodes' covers).

FP CONDEMNS VOUCHER-ENTRY SYSTEM

Rick Jude, Manager, Forbidden Planet
Forbidden Planet has, for eleven years, hosted signings with creators from all the genres that it embraces and has never felt it necessary to charge 'fans' an admission charge. In certain instances there have been costs on top of the advertising needed to make the event a success (travel, accommodation and 'star fees' amongst them), but in most cases the signings have been financially successful as well as incalculably beneficial in terms of publicity and good will from signers, publishers and attendees - even allowing for the long queues endured at some of our more massive public events!!!

To argue that as a commercial organisation the costs of an event involving high appearance fees should be dumped onto the 'fans' misses the fundamental point that we are all customer driven; we need the good will of these people to continue as commercial organisations.

A successful signing will involve product shifting from all the commercial organisations involved into the hands of 'fans', money always changes hands at these events. If 'star' appearances were involved it is no doubt that the organisers felt this necessary to shift lots of product, with their profit margins already built in and big fees can be much easier to bear when four or more commercial organisations are splitting the cost.

Effective advance publicity will ensure that lots of related products are sold before the event, so selling vouchers to force 'fans' to buy more on the day can only be seen as grossly unfair. Up until now this practice has been restricted to a few stores in the US.

The high turn outs to FP **Doctor Who** signings compared to what is described as a "small queue" at pay-signings would suggest that the 'fans' have made their choice as to whether or not they are fair, which will mean the organisers will still have to dip into their profits to pay for their 'stars', so what is gained? Certainly not good will. 'Nuff said.

The Forbidden Planet will be holding future signings at the Cafe Munchen, and as usual the 'fans' will be able to obtain autographs without having to pay admission.

TIMEWYRM APPREHENSION

Christopher Cox, Kent (11-2-91)
Before I start getting death threats from Peter Darvill-Evans for my pre-emptive criticisms of the first of the Timewyrm saga (ref: DWB#86), I should like to point out that I was not predicting, I was just expressing a certain amount of apprehension. And anyway, I did say that "maybe I'm speaking too soon, the books could be really good". His point that my criticism of the book is unjustified and that I am criticising it just because it's new couldn't be more wrong. I am anxious about the project because it sounds far from new or original than anything I have seen from a so-called new idea for a long time!

The borrowing from **Doctor Who** is noticeable in the early stages: we are to have a cybernoid (Cybermen) woman who changes form (Zygons etc.), infects the TARDIS (Mandragora) so the Doctor has to jettison the parts she has infected (**Castrovalva**). Basically, from all I have heard about the stories they seem thirsting for originality. Still, with good writers they could be excellent for, as all **Doctor Who** fans know, originality on its own is useless and a rehashed plot can be a classic!

It also seems to me that Mr.Darvill-Evans must nearly be as confident as I am under-confident if he has only read one manuscript from the new series! All in all, the unfortunate lack of innovation has left me cold of enthusiasm and any consequences regarding the public's reception worries me. And if Mr.Darvill-Evans is so worried about constructive criticism, maybe he should try it!

WELCOME RETURN OF DIAMOND LOGO

Laura McKnight, Edinburgh (1-2-91)
It's good to see that DWM have come to their senses and removed that awful JNT-style logo. Their inspirational decision to revert back to the classic logo of a much loved and praised era is very welcome. With BBC Video also doing the same, hopefully W.H.Allen will be next to elbow the LE logo. And they do need it to inspire some interest in their new cover reprints which, apart from **Ambassadors** and **Morbius,** are extremely lacklustre. This seems to be a sad reflection on W.H.Allen which is looking very jaded on the **Who** front. Victor Pemberton's long-awaited **Pescatons** was scheduled for December 1990 for ages and then, at the eleventh hour, it's put back for no good reason other than to make the 1991 schedule more interesting than it otherwise would have been.

Their proposed new stories seem very uninspired. I won't make any judgement on Timewyrm until the books are actually released, but it's the fact that the new novels will only feature the Seventh Doctor and Ace. What with the whole of **Doctor Who**'s history to choose from it does seem rather short-sighted.

KNOWING YOUR LIMITS

David Scott, Dundee (4-2-91)
Thanks for the article on **The Outer Limits** (DWB#87). A particular favourite of mine, this series is unjustly neglected both by TV and genre literature. The article was a fair overview of the series and managed to contain a good number of quotes that I had never seen before, although in places it was slightly confusing and contained small inaccuracies. For instance, the episode **Specimen: Unknown** was not padded out with "stock footage of people in emergency situations" as your writer states. The extra length needed was achieved by

a) an additional scene mounted during post-production and shot by assistant director Robert H. Justman;
b) an extended prologue;
c) slow-motion shots of an EVA being slowed down still further;
and
d) added establishing shots of the space station. These estblishing shots were stock footage, but the only footage resembling that described by your correspondent is the mass panic scenes used for the simulated nuclear strike in **The Architects of Fear** (taken, I believe, from **It Came from Beneath the Sea**), and these were always intended to be there!

I must also point out that the photo captioned as being from **The Invisible Enemy** is in fact from the first season episode **The Invisibles.** However, these minor criticisms aside, the article was a good introduction to the series, and was welcome for being included at all!

I must say how much I enjoy DWB's genre news coverage in general, and in particular such items as **The Macra Terror** photos. The **STTNG** coverage is also welcome, although personally I skip over the plot details - I'd rather wait to see the episode. Anyway, congratulations on producing such a density of interesting content on a monthly schedule.

NATHAN-TURNER "OBSESSED" WITH 'WHO

Dallas Jones, NSW Australia (10-2-91)
With regard to JNT's involvement at BBC Video, I thought he wanted to get **away** from **Doctor Who,** but it appears that he is obsessed with it. I don't think it will help his career as an independent producer to still be 'tied' to **Doctor Who.**

From your choices of episodes for the Hartnell Years video (ref: DWB#86), I would not have included **The Tenth Planet** 2 since it may be possible to convince BBC Video into releasing the three episodes of that story together with the regeneration scene with suitable commentary. Of course it is possible that episode 4 may turn up! I would have gone for **The Reign of Terror** 6, especially as it has the Doctor meeting Napoleon. I don't see why BBC Video can't release complete copies of all the Pertwee stories. So what if some stories and episodes are only available in black and white? If they can be seen on television here in Australia and America, why can't they be released on video?

I don't know why Bryan Jenner has tried to defend **Time and Rani** by rubbishing previous stories, monsters, etc. A story should stand on its own, and if any comparisons are to be made it should be with eitner contemporary stories or taking into account the shortcomings in the production of earlier stories. In particular, his comments on special effects have not considered the available technologies of the time. Also, his comment about the Ice Warriors' "gait" belies the fact that the Ice Warriors are reptilian in nature and therefore usually move slowly!

I do not feel that the Hartnell and Troughton plots were written based on the belief that the audience was infantile; Verity Lambert said that the programme was aimed at bright 14-year-olds, and such stories as **The Daleks, The Aztecs, The Crusades, Edge of Destruction** etc. are in no way pitched at the infantile.

Mr.Jenner's comments on Pip and Jane Baker's use of science forgets one thing; yes, they may use scientific terms and may have a basic idea of what they are using them for, but they never had a grasp of the concepts they were talking about - Christopher Bidmead did. To use lots of legthy words does not necessarily mean they understand what they are writing! I also cannot see how there is no difference between Mel, Zoe and Victoria. Yes they all screamed, but so did nearly all companions (even Kamelion). But Mel is from the present and is bright and bubbly; Zoe is from the future and is direct and questioning; and Victoria is from the past and is naive and demure - hardly the same. I get the impression from Jenner's style that he has written his review with tongue firmly planted in cheek or has been 'ordered' to write a review of praise.
ED: *Bryan's review of 'Time and the Rani' was submitted independently.*

TARDIS NOT IN DURHAM

Sean Robinson, Sunderland (24-1-91)
Firstly, I would like to point out that I am not in any way, shape or form part of Tardis in Durham. Secondly that I am a professional modelmaker working in the TV and film industry, therefore because of my profession I and other people like me do not get involved in fan clubs.

I am writing this letter because of a letter which was published in the January 1991 edition of DWB. It was written by Stephen Collins and in it he accused me of

1) Promising via the Sunderland Echo to build a half-size TARDIS and auction it. In the opening stages of organising the convention I was asked for ideas to keep the visitors interested. I put the idea of building a half-size TARDIS building it over 2 days then auctioning it at the end. They loved the idea, but when I said I would build it for nothing so long as they supplied the materials they immediately went off the idea. I never heard anything more about it.

2) He said that I charged them for bringing my full-size TARDIS. This is completely untrue. I gave up my time for nothing and also supplied my TARDIS and model to show completely free, all they had to pay for was a hire van to transport the models and props in which they were perfectly willing to do.

3) He also said that I would not let anyone touch the models, even the disabled members. Because the models are worth a lot of money I decided it would be impractical to let everybody pick up the models. However I was on hand to talk and explain about the models and also to hand models over to let people get a >

closer look. However the disabled members could not even get anywhere near the models because Tardis in Durham had set them out on a 5ft high stage with a steep set of steps - an impossible obstacle for a wheelchair.

4) He also accused me of charging people to photograph the TARDIS and pocketing the fee. This is completely untrue; during the first convention Tardis in Durham charged people to photograph the TARDIS but I certainly did not and never have done.

5) He also accused me of not allowing Sylvester McCoy access to the TARDIS. This is a complete fabrication and ludicrous - Sylvester McCoy even picked the lock when we were late back from lunch which I did not mind in the least. I have Sylvester on video tape wandering in and out of the TARDIS all day.

I do not know why Stephen Collins made those comments about me, but one thing is sure - I will never get involved with Tardis in Durham in any way, shape or form.

Ian Wheeler, Cumbria (5-1-91)

My thanks to Stephen Collins for his response to my review of Tardis in Durham. I appreciate the effort that must have gone into organizing the event and it was by no means the worst convention I've ever been to. Mr.Collins' explanation for Sylvester's apparent uneasiness seems fair enough, as do his other points. I sincerely hope that this year's event is successful.

On a different note, I'm pleased to see that DWB is covering **Doctor Who** 'phone-lines'. These never-ending adventure games are the ultimate form of fan exploitation (far worse than the £20 videos) and should never have been licenced. Slightly more encouraging is the news that BBC Video may be releasing Davison and Colin Baker stories in 1992. After last year's black and white releases and this year's 70's titles, this seems like a logical move. Some new stories on BBC1 would be nice too...

DELIBERATELY ENGINEERED

Robert Bradley, NSW Australia (21-1-91)

If the BBC had shown a fraction of its ingenuity in attempting to save **Doctor Who** as they have in getting rid of it, the series would now be looking forward to its status as a Thirty Year Miracle instead of facing extinction through neglect. In DWB#64 (April 1989) I speculated that the early booking-in of Season 26 was **not** the result of a growing regard for **Doctor Who** within the BBC, but simply a desire to fulfil their final commitments to the series as quickly as possible because they intended to axe it upon the expiration of Sylvester McCoy's contract. It gives me no pleasure at all to see that what I had hoped was merely paranoid suspicion has been proved right. In retrospect, it is easy to see that the show's days have been numbered ever since the original postponement. It seems as though once the BBC have made a decision like that, they will carry it through one way or the another, even if it does take a little time. One can only conclude that the circumstances leading up to **Doctor Who's** demise have been engineered **deliberately,** for no corporation which handled its products as carelessly as the BBC appear to have done with **Doctor Who** would expect to stay in business very long.

SEND YOUR VIEWS ON ALL ASPECTS OF TELEFANTASY TO THE EDITORIAL ADDRESS. TO AVOID YOUR LETTER BEING EDITED, PLEASE KEEP YOUR VIEWS FAIRLY BRIEF AND TO THE POINT - THIS WILL GUARANTEE ITS PUBLICATION.

TIMEWYRM

'GENESYS'

With no Doctor Who for our screens in the foreseeable future, attention is turning towards W.H. Allen's new fiction series – *Timewyrm* – as the source for new stories. Here we examine John Peel's draft copy for the first book in the series of four, *Genesys*, due for publication in June, and consider whether it posesses the strength and depth of story-telling "too broad for the small screen" to interest both fans and casual readers to this new concept.

- *Please note that this preview contains a basic synopsis of the storyline which some readers may not wish to know in advance of publication.*

THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH is the oldest surviving book known. It is a collection of poems from Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq) that dates back to the third millenium BC. The hero of the stories is the legendary King Gilgamesh who undertakes various fantastic adventures aided by his companion Enkidu. The collected poems are a fascinating volume which contains a flood story that formed the historical basis for the biblical Noah's Ark. It is as good a historical basis for a Dr Who story as you could find and it therefore comes as no surprise to discover that John Peel has distilled the component elements from it to form a rough outline for *Genesys*, his entry into the *Timewyrm* series.

The story starts with Gilgamesh discovering a "god" up in the hills. However, this deity is part metal. It claims to be Ishtar, the goddess of love and war, and it/she tries to trap the king in a battle of words. But Gilgamesh is not so easily tricked and he leaves Ishtar and her strange metal ziggurat to continue on his spying mission against the rival kingdom of Kish.

> Within this regular-shaped hole, Gilgamesh could see the creature that had been calling him. Whatever it was, it had told the truth : it was no man.
>
> It was about the size of a man, and about the shape of a man. But instead of skin, it was covered in the shining non-metal of the ziggurat itself. Instead of eyes, it had twin golden fires that burned without consuming any fuel. It had arms and legs too, and a body. But it had neither hair nor clothing. Yet it was naked, as a man would be naked. Nor was it shaped like a woman.

The Doctor, in an attempt to store some of his memories within the TARDIS telepathic circuit, accidentally wipes Ace's memory. This gives Peel the opportunity to let the Doctor explain all about the Time Lords and who he is in order to fulfil the prerequisite from Darvill-Evans that the books should work for the first time reader with no knowledge of the tv series. It is an awkward plot device that will frustrate a good many readers who don't want to be bogged down with something that they already know. Would it not have been better to include a potted history of the Doctor at the start of each of the new books for the benefit of the tiny handful of first-time readers?

> Abruptly, another person materialised by the panel. This one was tall and imposing. A long burgundy-coloured coat and long, red scarf hung over the thin frame. A burgundy-coloured hat perched atop a mass of curly brown hair. The newcomer's face broke into a hearty, toothy grin.
>
> "Hello Doctor!" he said.
>
> "Oh no!" Her companion stared at the intruder in almost despair.
>
> "Who's that?" she demanded, startled.
>
> "Me…"

Things get worse. The Doctor's past starts to manifest itself in the form of previous companions and a Doctor. They materialise as telepathic projections which warn the present Doctor about some impending doom. This goes to prove that Peel has re-watched *The Edge of Destruction* and read *The Wheel in Space*, but it does little to move the plot along in anything resembling a good or dramatic fashion.

The TARDIS materialises in ancient Mesopotamia where its arrival saves the day for Gilgamesh and Enkidu who have been ambushed by spies from Kish. Ace has regained her memory and she uses her nitro nine to rescue Gilgamesh from his attackers. The time travellers are taken for gods. Meanwhile Ishtar has taken control of Kish and is turning it into a biological computer with a strange temple at its centre staffed by a mysterious priesthood. The Doctor decides to investigate the peculiar goings-on while Gilgamesh, Enkidu and Ace roam the city in the guise of traders.

By this point I was having difficulty with the plot. It had a "been there, seen it, done it" feel that held nothing new or of interest for me. The first time reader might also find things a little hard going as the explanations given seem to cloud proceedings rather than give any great clarity to the action.

The Doctor enters the temple and gets captured. He pretends to be chloroformed, but uses his respiratory bypass system to avoid being anaethetised. Out in the city Ace wanders off and meets a musician, Avram. The two break into the temple and free the Doctor who is furious at being rescued before he has had time to find out more about the strange goings-on. They leave the city and meet up again with Gilgamesh and Enkidu. For the time being they will return to Uruk. On the way back the Doctor realises that Kish is laid out just like a radio transmitter; soon he will have to return.

Avram sings a song about the flood and a huge metal ark. When Ace claims it is only a story, the musician produces a sophisticated key that he claims to have picked up at the sight of the ark's final resting place up in the hills.

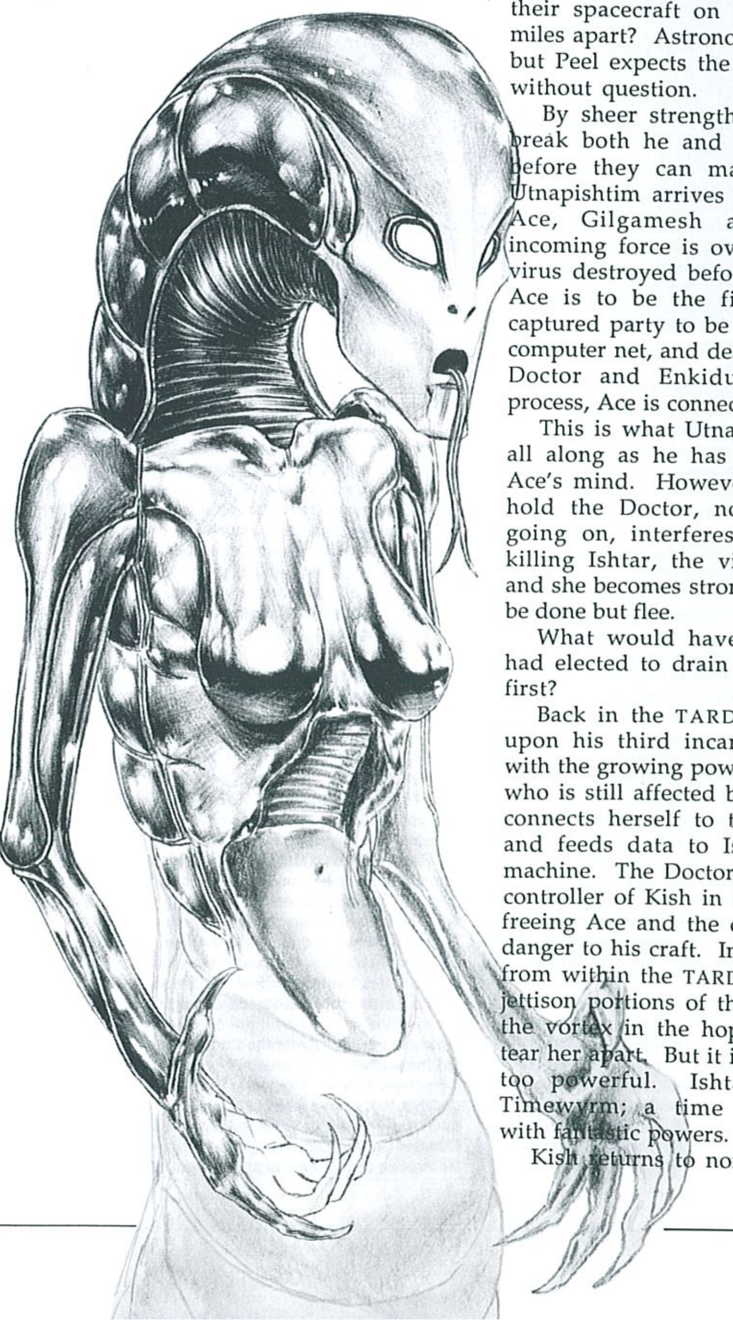
The Doctor elects to split their forces. He will go to Kish with Enkidu while Avram, Gilgamesh and Ace will look into the strange metal boat. Ace and her party climb up into the hills where they encounter some bio-engineered beings who claim to be the guards of Utnapishtim, the builder of the ark. They agree to let the travellers pass.

The Doctor and Enkidu trick their way into the temple only to discover the Inner Sanctum. At its heart stands Ishtar, a robotic half-woman, half-spider. She is the remains of a once brilliant scientist who has used cybernetics to enhance her life and mental prowess. Kish is her construction; its people will become a power-house for her mind that will extend her powers even further. In the end this mental net will take over the entire planet. This is the crisis that the telepathic projections the TARDIS created tried to warn the Doctor about

Ishtar realises that the Doctor is alien and sets him aside for further study. In the meantime she will drain Enkidu of his mental energy.

Ace meets Utnapishtim in his "ark" — a crashed spacecraft — and discovers that he is from the same world as Ishtar. It transpires that she destroyed their home world, but not before he escaped. However, he thought he had killed the destroyer of his planet by introducing a virus into her computer net. He is horrified to discover that she has survived. There is no choice : he will have to introduce the virus again.

What sort of odds are against the last two survivors from a dead world crashing their spacecraft on the same planet just miles apart? Astronomical to say the least, but Peel expects the reader to accept this without question.



By sheer strength Enkidu manages to break both he and the Doctor free, but before they can make good an escape Utnapishtim arrives in a scout craft with Ace, Gilgamesh and Avram. The incoming force is overcome and the new virus destroyed before it can be released. Ace is to be the first victim from the captured party to be fed to Ishtar and her computer net, and despite the efforts of the Doctor and Enkidu, who dies in the process, Ace is connected to the computer.

This is what Utnapishtim had planned all along as he has hidden the virus in Ace's mind. However, before it can take hold the Doctor, not knowing what is going on, interferes so that instead of killing Ishtar, the virus melds with her and she becomes stronger. There is little to be done but flee.

What would have happened if Ishtar had elected to drain Ace last rather than first?

Back in the TARDIS, the Doctor calls upon his third incarnation to help deal with the growing powers of Ishtar, but Ace, who is still affected by the computer link, connects herself to the telepathic circuit and feeds data to Ishtar from the time machine. The Doctors manage to trap the controller of Kish in the telepathic circuit, freeing Ace and the city, but not without danger to his craft. In order to shed Ishtar from within the TARDIS the Doctor has to jettison portions of the time machine into the vortex in the hope that the flux will tear her apart. But it is too late, she is now too powerful. Ishtar has become the Timewyrm; a time travelling monster with fantastic powers.

Kish returns to normal and the Doctor helps Utnapishtim to leave Earth in order to continue his quest for a new home. However, things are not all sorted out as the Timewyrm contains portions of the TARDIS and is now heading for Earth in the future…

The back cover of the book claims that the Timewyrm series of novels are "stories too broad and too deep for the small screen." This claim is as fanciful as Peel's derivative plot. I won't bother to list all the re-used elements as any reader with some knowledge of the show will have spotted most of them, but if you take them away, what's left is hardly inspired stuff. And I can't help feeling that much of the story could be realised in a studio without losing most of the book's essential elements. So much for the grand claims in the publisher's blurb.

The cover is also well below what I had expected. Bad layout and design and uninspired artwork make the whole package look sloppy and therefore hardly likely to draw in readers who are new to the show. I might have been expecting too much given the potential of the range, but my opinions have been echoed by everyone to whom I have shown the text and cover. This doesn't bode well for the series as a whole, as a bad start could prove very difficult to launch from.

In the original epic Enkidu is described as being described in thick hair, and Peel has elected to retain this detail and explain it away by claiming that he is the last of the Neanderthals. This would make him 35,000 years old! However, Enkidu's death at the hands of Ishtar conflicts with the account in the epic and although I understand why Peel has been selective in his use of the original legend, his choice of what gets kept is a little hard to comprehend.

On the plus side, Peel's writing style is light and flowing. In some respects it is very similar to Donald Cotton's *Myth Makers*, which makes for an easy read that is simple to follow. Humour also plays a sizable part in the overall feel and I certainly found this a major plus-point when the story started to flag. All this would suggest that John Peel can write well enough, as his Dalek books showed, but he does not appear to have that creative spark needed to write good Dr Who.

I feel that this was a chance wasted. A good, inventive story, told in an imaginative and confident style was what was needed to kick off this new range. Instead we get John Peel showing off about how much he knows about the series, bound up in a flimsy excuse for a plot. I must stress that this review was written from a draft copy, so some elements might have been altered for publication, but unless a major re-write was undertaken then what I saw will be what we get come June. In the end I preferred the five thousand year-old original epic, which I am sure is guaranteed a shelf-life far in excess of that of *Genesys*.

ANTHONY CLARK

STAR TREK
THE NEXT GENERATION

SEASON 4 EPISODE GUIDE

4) SUDDENLY HUMAN

20TH OCTOBER 1990

WRITTEN BY JOHN WHELPLEY & JERI TAYLOR; STORY BY RALPH PHILLIPS; DIRECTED BY GABRIELLE BEAUMONT; MUSIC BY DENNIS MCCARTHY; SPECIAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR DAN CURRY

A change of pace as the theme of family ties continues from an unexpected direction. Jean-Luc Picard, famous for his dislike of children, is forced to assume a parental role with surprising consequences.

The Enterprise monitors a distress call from a Talarian vessel and finds an observation ship adrift with a serious radiation leak. There are life signs aboard yet there is cause for caution as the Talarians have booby-trapped such ships in past border conflicts with the Federation. But since no Talarian ships will be able to reach the scene for hours, Picard dispatches an away team. They discover six unconscious teenagers on what must have been a training mission, but the biggest shock comes when Dr Crusher determines that one of the boys is human.

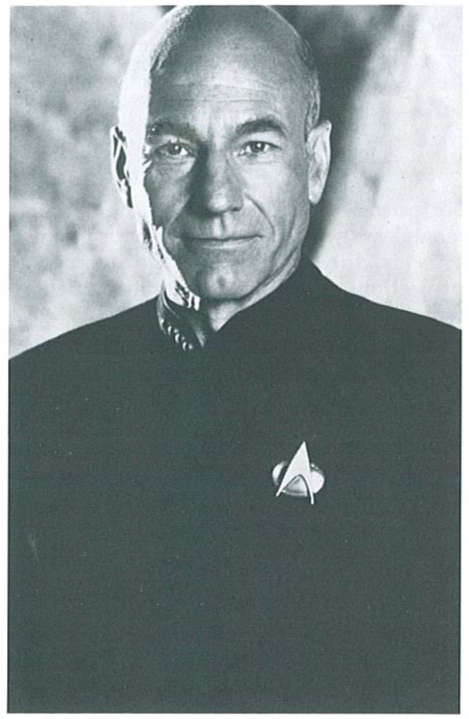
The human appears to be the leader of the group and he refuses to say anything to the doctor when she discovers that he has had a number of old fractures and other injuries in the past. He only responds when Picard appears in sick bay and is identified as the captain. He asks to be returned to his captain, Endar. Dr Crusher worries that the Talarians, who are known for being ruthless with their enemies, may have abused the boy. The boy, Jonoh, becomes violent when asked to remove his gloves — because he does not want to touch an "alien". He asks Worf if the humans have made him a prisoner too and cannot understand how the Klingon could take orders from a female like Dr Crusher.

Picard learns that a DNA match has established that the boy is the son of Starfleet officers who were killed when the Talarians destroyed a Federation colony in disputed territory. The boy had been less than four years old at the time. His grandmother, a Starfleet admiral, is elated to learn that he has survived, but Troi warns Picard that any attempted reunion will only be painful and confusing until the boy can come to accept who and what he is. Picard agrees but is shocked when she adds that *he* must be the one to help Jonoh rediscover his humanity. The Talarians are a rigidly patriarchal society and Captain Picard is the only person with whom the boy has shown any connection. The captain awkwardly attempts to make small talk with the young man and learns that he is accustomed to staying in his captain's quarters — something that Picard insists will not work here, saying that there is nothing in his quarters to appeal to a young person. To his dismay this is not true. The young man immediately disrupts the careful order of Picard's rooms as he examines the many prized momentos displayed there, including the Klingon dagger Picard wore when he defended Worf at his trial. Picard asks Jonoh if Endar has ever hurt him but the boy says that pain is no consideration. He also says it is a lie that he is not Talarian.

Picard sees Troi again, insisting that he is not the right person for this job and confiding to her that he is not comfortable with children. The entire crew is well aware of this 'secret', so the counsellor is amused by this revelation, but uses it as an opportunity to inquire deeper into why Picard is so reluctant to assume a parental role, asking him about his own childhood. He is not pleased by this probing but finally recalls that he dedicated himself from such an early age to the goal of joining Starfleet that "I probably skipped my childhood altogether." Troi assures the still-dubious captain that no one is born being a good parent.

He returns to his quarters to be greeted by a blast of noise which seems to be the 24th century equivalent of heavy metal, and immediately orders the computer to shut it off. He shows the boy pictures of himself with his parents and tries to determine what he remembers of the early years of his life. Jonoh says he knows that Endar rescued him and he seems untroubled by the deaths of the colonists, yet memories of the battle do begin to haunt him.

Endar's ship finally arrives and he demands the return of the boys. He will not explain how the human child came to be among them and will not consider allowing him to be returned to his true family, saying "he is my son". Picard meets with Endar personally, trying to decide if he has abused the boy. He is horrified to hear how Endar led the attack on the Federation colony and found the child clinging to his mother's body. Endar claims rights to the boy based on Talarian tradition because he lost his own son at the hands of humans. He denies ever having harmed the boy — his injuries came about as he desperately sought to win his father's approval and respect in the rough games Talarian youth play. Picard believes him but still has no intention of turning the boy back over to Endar. But the Talarian has called for reinforcements and is prepared to go to war over the child. It seems to Picard that the obvious way out is to use the Talarian tradition that would grant a child of the boy's age the right to choose, and to persuade him that he is a human.



But the boy has become deeply troubled and restless, complaining that he cannot do any of the things that calm him here. Picard offers to show him what he does when he feels like this and introduces him to a form of futuristic racketball. The boy proves a quick learner and is making a game of it when he collapses in tears, overwhelmed by memories of his mother's death. Picard comforts him and when they talk later assures him that while this sorrow is part of being human, he can also feel joy. A visit to Ten Forward and an encounter with Wesley indeed leads him to laugh out loud a short time later.

It is all the more unexpected then when the boy later walks into Picard's room as he is sleeping and plunges the Klingon dagger into the captain's chest. Picard realises it is not just a bad dream when he comes to in sick bay while Dr Crusher is trying to stop the bleeding. He wants to know why Jonoh did it and demands to see him immediately, but the doctor is in no mood to indulge him until his condition is improved.

Riker must now contend with Endar's threats and tells him that because of the attempt to murder Picard, his son's fate is now up to Starfleet. Sensors show other warships approaching. The boy is finally brought to Picard, who wants to know why he did this. He replies that it does not matter — he had attacked a captain and is ready to die at his hands. Picard brushes all of that aside and is only interested in the boy's feelings — how could this have happened when he had seemed so happy a short time before? The boy admits that he had been happy but then he felt he had betrayed his father and all that he had learned from him. The closer he grew to Picard the more he seemed to deny everything that had been important to him and he could not allow himself to do that.

War is moments away when Picard comes to the bridge with Jonoh and tells Endar that the crime that has been committed is his, not the boy's. It has seemed so clear to all of them that everything would be fine if the boy could just be persuaded to stay that they had not listened to the father that he loves. Picard personally takes the boy to the transporter and before he goes Jonoh removes his gloves and embraces the captain.

Chad Allen, formerly seen in OUR HOUSE, is effective as the young man pulled between two cultures. The racketball court was created out of the set normally used to depict the holodeck when it has no program running. The crew were surprised by Patrick Stewart's skill with a racket, not knowing that he had been an enthusiastic squash player prior to being stranded where that game is virtually unknown, and it is possible that this court will be seen again.

5) REMEMBER ME

27TH OCTOBER 1990

WRITTEN BY LEE SHELDON; DIRECTED BY CLIFF BOLE; MUSIC BY JAY CHATTAWAY; SPECIAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR ROBERT LEGATO

Although this episode features the return of The Traveller, it is not a Wesley story as was expected, although Wesley is ultimately the cause of the crisis that threatens his mother. Instead, Gates McFadden assumes centre stage for this story, which again toys with the complexities of the relationship between the Enterprise's doctor and captain.

The ship has stopped at Starbase 133 for crew rotation, allowing Beverly Crusher to offer a ride home to an old friend. Her mentor, an elderly doctor named Quaice, is retiring after years of service in Starfleet. As they walk to his quarters he talks about his wife's death and says that the worst aspect of growing old is losing all the people who are important to you and realising that you did not take the time to appreciate them while they are here. Beverly reflects on her own losses and goes to engineering to see Wesley, only to find him rushing to finish some experiment so that Geordi can be ready to leave the Starbase. He is toying with Kosinski's formulae for improving warp engines that were first tried in WHERE NO ONE HAS GONE BEFORE. As he starts to shut down the experiment a peculiar flash of light occurs but he and Geordi can find nothing wrong. When he finishes he notices that his mother has left engineering.

Beverly goes to visit Dr Quaice and is stunned to find his room empty. The computer says he is nowhere on board. The situation becomes more mysterious when Worf denies any knowledge of a guest being on board and Picard complains that she had not put in the required request for his approval for such a guest. O'Brien has no memory of beaming him aboard and, strangest of all, there are no computer records of Dr Quaice having served in Starfleet at all. Riker and Data are to explore the possibility that the computer has been tampered with, but Dr Crusher wants to examine O'Brien as well to see if he has been tampered with in some way. When she goes to sickbay she finds part of her staff is missing and her nurses don't remember any of the missing doctors.

She and Picard are summoned to engineering where Geordi and Wesley admit that the experiment caused a warp bubble to form but they deny that it could have affected someone as far away as Quaice would have been. Beverly's next visit to sick bay is more disturbing that the first — she now has no staff there at all. When she rushes to the bridge with the news Data informs her that she has no staff and that the crew totals just 230 persons, not over 1000 as she claims. A concerned Picard meets with her in the ready room. She is saying that the ship has lost over 800 personnel yet there is no way that the engineering experiment could affect an entire starship. The doctor anticipates that he must wonder if she is quite sane and ironically notes that she has had herself examined by the only doctor on board and she could find no signs of malfunction. But neither can she explain why she is the only one not affected by this phenomenon. She pleads with Picard to return the ship to Starbase 133, even though he only has her word to go on. He hesitates only a moment before ordering the course change, saying that her word has always been good enough for him.

When she returns once more to sickbay a wall erupts into a spinning blue vortex that nearly sucks her in to its whirlpool, then disappears as abruptly as it came. Geordi can find no trace that the disturbance existed and Data reports that all 114 crew members are accounted for. Beverly announces that over 900 people are now missing and asks Data how he can account for all the empty rooms on the ship. She discovers that Worf is among the missing and no one can even remember him. She asks Troi if she has gone mad but the counsellor says that that is a question she cannot answer.

Suddenly fearing that Wesley may be missing too, she goes to engineering in a panic, but finds him. She worries that they may not have much time but he does not believe her. When she insists that they need help he says that the only person who knows enough about the warp experiments to help is the mysterious Traveller from Tau Alpha C who was the real power behind Kosinski's experiments, but he has not been able to reach him. She decides that they must go to the captain, but on the way there Wesley disappears. Beverly rushes to the bridge to find no one left except Picard. The two of them are the only ones on the ship and Picard insists that he has never heard of Riker or Troi or any of the rest. The doctor is moved to anger, shouting that they deserve more than to be shrugged off. She ridicules the idea that the two of them could be roaming about the galaxy in the flagship of the Federation with no crew at all, but the captain looks genuinely puzzled and says that they never needed a crew before. The doctor calms herself and decides that the only logical step is to have the computer monitor Picard's life signs until something happens to him too. He agrees and she apologises for losing her temper. He replies that if he has truly forgotten his closest friend then he deserved it. Beverly says that she has been meaning to say something to him for quite some time now and she might not have another chance. But before she can finish, he is gone. She vows not to forget and to bring them all back. The blue vortex appears again and nearly pulls her, feet-first, through the view screen.

The vortex is actually an attempt by Wesley and Geordi on the real Enterprise to retrieve Beverly from the warp bubble that trapped her during Wesley's experiment and took her outside of normal space and time. But they cannot hold the threshold and the bubble disappears from the energy monitors. Wesley believes there is now no way to get his mother back, but then the Traveller arrives and says that there is a way. Picard calls a staff meeting and asks the Traveller if Beverly is alive. The alien says that as long as she thinks she is alive, she is alive. He responds to Riker's impatience by trying to explain that thought and reality and time are connected in ways that humans do not yet understand, although Wesley is beginning to. When Beverly Crusher was caught in the static warp bubble she created her own reality. Her precise thoughts at the time created its shape and reality. But even the Traveller cannot enter this reality. If they can establish a stable gateway Beverly herself must choose to walk through it. He asks Picard to return the ship to the exact location where the bubble was formed so that he and Wesley can try to recreate the gateway.

Beverly is using the computer to try to logically diagnose what is happening and comes to the conclusion that she must seek help from Tau Alpha C. She tells the computer to lay in a course for that destination, even though it will take over four months to reach at maximum warp. When the helm does not respond she is told that the planet no longer exists on the charts — and there is now nothing to be seen through the viewer except a blue mist. Beverly realises that there is something wrong with the universe.

The Enterprise returns to the spot where the bubble formed but Wesley is horrified to discover that it is collapsing and will be gone in minutes. Beverly has come to the same conclusion and now knows that she is the one in the bubble. The ship is starting to disappear as the bubble contracts. She realises now that the vortex was an attempt to recover her and decides that they will probably try again in engineering. She rushes through the lower decks, just stepping ahead of the disappearing bulkheads. Picard joins the desperate group in engineering as the final minutes count down. He is rewarded when Beverly careers head-first out of the vortex and crashes to the deck. They share a rare embrace but she needs additional reassurance that this is now real and asks him how many people are on board the Enterprise. The captain replies that there are 1014, including her guest, Dr Quaice.

The writers chose to repeat almost word for word the scene from THE HIGH GROUND in which Beverly Crusher was also about to tell Picard something when she thought they might not survive — a moment that was likewise forestalled by events. So there is a continuing cliffhanger in this popular relationship. This episode and several others this season have moved in the direction of allowing the doctor to exhibit a little more toughness than has been the case in the past and she is participating in more dangerous situations. All of which may be some consolation for the fact that she had to speak one of the dumbest lines in the history of the series in BEST OF BOTH WORLDS PART 2 (you will know it when you hear it).

6) LEGACY

3RD NOVEMBER 1990

WRITTEN BY JOE MENOSKY; DIRECTED BY ROBERT SCHEERER; MUSIC BY DENNIS MCCARTHY; SPECIAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR DAN CURRY

This episode again turns upon the Enterprise's own history and recalls once more the tragic loss of Tasha Yar, the ship's original security officer and the one person with whom Data has been "intimate". In the third series Tasha lived again in the alternate timeline created in YESTERDAY'S ENTERPRISE, only to die more heroically than she had in SKIN OF EVIL. The new Yar story also explored the ways in which Data has and has not assimilated the subtleties of human friendship and deception.

The episode begins with this season's first glimpse of the Enterprise poker game, presided over by the resident card shark, Will Riker. Data has in the past been easily bluffed and unable to disguise when he has a good hand, but no more. He and Riker are playing with equal skill and have divided the night's winnings between them. Riker tries a new card trick on Data, but the android sees through it immediately and ends up with the whole pot. Riker commends him on how well he has learnt the game.

The evening is disrupted when Picard signals from the bridge that a Federation freighter has sent a distress call. The ship has gone into emergency orbit around Turkana 4 but the warp engines breach just seconds before the Enterprise can get close enough to transport the two crewmen to safety. However, Geordi detects signs that an escape pod separated and landed on the planet. Unfortunately it has landed near the colony. The crew have heard a great deal about this place because Turkana 4 was the home planet of Tasha Yar. It is an Earth colony that severed relations with the Federation nearly fifteen years ago following a brutal civil war. The last contact with a Federation ship was six years ago and the crew were warned at that time that anyone transporting to the surface would be killed. Tasha had described a completely lawless society ruled by gangs, a place where murder and rape were everyday events.

Picard orders an away team down to locate the missing crewmen, if possible. Worf objects to Dr Crusher going along, given what Tasha had said about the danger but the doctor coolly replies that she can handle herself and Riker says she must come. They have already discovered that the surface city was destroyed long ago. The settlement now extends into tunnels that run several kilometres underground. The team follows the trail of the escape pod into the tunnels where they quickly encounter The Coalition, one of two cadres that run the settlement out of separate strongholds. Each group is implanted with proximity detectors that alert them to the presence of one another — thereby keeping their conflict within boundaries and not allowing either side to do serious harm to the other. The Coalition's leader tells him that their enemies, The Alliance, have the crewmen and offer to help recover them in exchange for hard-to-get phasers. The away team says that they will take the offer back to their captain but reveal that they have heard nothing pleasant about Turkana from a former crewmate who was born here.

Picard will not consider trading weapons for crewmen and is formulating alternatives when The Coalition contacts the ship with startling news — they have decided that it is in their best interests to help get the crewmen back without demanding anything in exchange, and that they are sending Tasha Yar's sister, Ishara, to act as liaison between them. Troi senses deception in The Coalition's leader but she cannot determine if the young woman is Tasha's sister or not.

Data meets Ishara in the transporter room and she immediately assumes that the android was built for combat. He quickly dispels this notion and puzzles over the fact that Tasha never spoke of her sister. Ishara reveals a bitterness towards her sister, saying that she was a coward to leave and that she hardly remembers what Tasha looked like. Picard welcomes her to a staff meeting but she acknowledges that they must doubt who she is and offers to let Dr Crusher test her DNA. The results of that test will take several hours and rescue plans go forward in the meantime. Ishara fills in the history of Turkana 4. Thirty years ago dozens of factions fought until the surface city was in ruins. The government tried to control the situation by giving the two most powerful factions police powers while keeping them in check with the detectors. They soon replaced the government. Tasha had hated the cadres, blaming them for their parents' death. When she got her chance to leave fifteen years ago she had asked Ishara to come too, but she had already joined The Coalition, which she thought of as her family.

When a ransom demand is received from The Alliance — along with a threat to kill the hostage crewmen — Picard decides that they need Ishara's help. If Geordi can reach the escape pod in Alliance territory for a few minutes he can use the tracking equipment it contains to home in on the imprisoned crewmen. Ishara volunteers to beam in on a different level of the complex, using her detector to trigger the alarms and draw attention away from the rest of the team. The plan succeeds but Geordi needs more time than expected and O'Brien also has trouble beaming Ishara out. Riker orders Worf to stay with Geordi and goes to her aid. She has been injured but he gets her back to the ship. Picard greets him with the news that she is indeed Tasha's sister, and also reprimands his first officer for taking unnecessary risks. Riker says that since Tasha was lost on an away team under his command, he was determined not to lose her sister too.

Picard himself goes to sick bay to thank the young woman for doing more than he had expected. But he is angered when she replies that she does not run away when things get tough like her sister. He recalls that the first time he saw Tasha she was crawling through a minefield to rescue trapped colonists. He was so impressed by her that he pulled strings to get her reassigned to the Enterprise, where she never failed to put the crew's safety before her own.

A somewhat subdued Ishara has another conversation with Data and asks him if Tasha had many friends. To her surprise he includes himself amongst them. She asks him if he is able to have friends and he describes how he is able to build up a sense of familiarity, leading to anticipation and the state of missing what is absent. He continues to miss Tasha Yar.

Geordi locates the hostage crew but they are too far underground to beam a rescue team directly to them. The ship's phasers will have to cut a path directly to the rock and into an abandoned storage area, then beam a team down to travel the rest of the way on foot. Ishara wants to go to guide them but they cannot afford to allow her implant to trigger the alarms. She says it cannot be removed because it will explode on contact with the air — you join a cadre for life. But Data devises a way in which Dr Crusher can safely remove it. She tells Data that she has been thinking that maybe she was wrong about Tasha being weak. Had she known there was a place like the Enterprise where people can trust one another she might have chosen differently. She tells Data that she completely trusts him and even considers him a friend. He says that he would like to consider her his friend too. Data reports to Picard and Troi that Ishara has decided to have the implant removed and also has expressed a desire to leave Turkana 4 and one day apply to Starfleet Academy as her sister did. Troi warns that she senses ambiguity and divided loyalties from Ishara — and asks Data why he is so strong in her support. The android says that he has become used to her.

Ishara also asks why he has helped her when he has nothing to gain, but he says he does have something to gain — her continued presence on the ship. When the implant is removed she gives it to Data to remember her by if something goes wrong on the mission. She does lead the rescue team to the area where the crewmen are being held, but she disappears while they are being located. Data finds her overloading the fusion generator that powers The Alliance's defence system. She tells him that her cadre has 3000 troops waiting at the perimeter. Data insists that he cannot allow this because the Federation will be responsible for the resulting deaths. She is prepared to die in the explosion but warns him to leave. When he will not go she fires at him and misses just before Riker arrives to stun her. Data averts the destruction of the generator and the status quo is maintained on Turkana 4. The Coalition demands the return of Ishara and Picard permits it, arguing to Riker that the fault lies partly with themselves in being so eager to see something of Tasha in her.

Ishara tells Data that she did what she had to and is sorry if she hurt him in the process — and that he is the closest thing to a friend that she has ever had. Some days after she is gone, Data goes to Riker, puzzled about why his thoughts continue to dwell on Ishara and why he was so easily misled. Riker says that in all trust there is the possibility of betrayal, but without it there could be none of the emotional bonds that make us what we are. Data decides that it is perhaps fortunate then that he is spared the emotional consequences. He does not show Riker what he has been carrying around with him — Ishara's implant.

Beth Toussaint, the actress who plays Ishara Yar, actually bears a striking resemblance to Linda Hamilton rather than Denise Crosby. A half-day's worth of filming had to be reshot when it was discovered that the combination of the thin blouse she was wearing and the cold temperatures on the set were producing unintended visual effects, a few examples of which remain in the final product.

7) REUNION

10TH NOVEMBER 1990

WRITTEN BY THOMAS PERRY & JO PERRY AND RONALD D. MOORE & BRANNON BRAGA; STORY BY DREW DEIGHAN AND THOMAS PERRY & JO PERRY; DIRECTED BY JONATHAN FRAKES; MUSIC BY RON JONES; SPECIAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR ROBERT LEGATO

This episode is as rich in reliance on The Next Generation's own history as was the previous one. Indeed, Data and Worf are the two characters whose personal histories have been the most fully established in the series, perhaps because they are the most alien of the crew. If Data has been unfortunate in his personal relationships, Worf seems increasingly to be cast in a Shakespearian tragedy, in which this is the darkest chapter to date. The threads of his past come together as the woman he loved, but did not win, in THE EMISSARY, returns on a mission for the leader of the Klingon High Council, who had conspired to brand Worf's father a traitor to the empire in SINS OF THE FATHER.

The Enterprise is involved in routine scientific studies when a Klingon cruiser unexpectedly uncloaks and they are hailed by Ambassador K'Ehleyr, the half-human, half-Klingon special emissary for the Federation. She says she has an urgent matter to discuss with Picard and asks to beam aboard. Worf objects when the captain orders him to met her in the transporter room — he is afraid that his recent dishonour in the eyes of Klingons may offend her. Picard acidly reminds Worf that he is a member of his crew and he will not go into hiding every time a Klingon ship uncloaks.

It is Worf who is shocked when K'Ehleyr arrives — she has brought with her a small boy. They first take the child, Alexander, to the ship's daycare centre, then are finally alone. With her usual impudent humour, K'Ehleyr asks if he doesn't at least bite her on the cheek for old time's sake. Worf assumes that she has not heard of his official dishonour, but the fact is that she simply does not care. She has never respected Klingon traditions as he does, and he is outraged that she would not even consider shunning him. But he is more disturbed when she wants to know if he has a question to ask her. He refuses to ask it but she makes it clear that the boy is his son.

K'Ehleyr meets alone with Picard and brings the grim news that the Klingon Empire may be facing civil war. The conflicts he had seen when he attended Worf's trial have grown more severe. The ambassador warns that a struggle for power between two factions in the High Council will draw in the rest of Klingon society. This crisis has been coming for some time. Only the influence of K'Mpec, leader of the Council and Klingon Supreme Commander has prevented open war. K'Mpec now waits on the Klingon cruiser to meet with Picard alone. Picard has no great desire to meet with K'Mpec, having denounced him and the High Council for allowing Worf's family to be falsely blamed in order to save the honour of another powerful family represented on the Council after it was discovered that a Klingon betrayed the Khitomer outpost to the Romulans years before. K'Mpec refused to allow the truth to be told in order to hold the Council and the Empire together, but Picard refused to allow Worf to be executed for his father's alleged crime (the fate of a traitor's family in Klingon law). Worf chose to accept public dishonour if his brother and children we allowed to live honourably under an assumed name. Worf and his brother have sworn to one day clear their father's name and avenge themselves on the true traitors. All the records have been sealed and only the participants know the truth.

Picard finally goes to K'Mpec, who asks for his help : he is dying, poisoned by small doses of an incurable toxin placed in his wine for weeks. After he dies he wants Picard to act in his name to arbitrate the struggle for power that will ensue. Picard is horrified by the idea and objects that this is no role for a Federation officer. K'Mpec says that is no different from any other mediation he has performed but the captain still refuses. K'Mpec says that it is an insult to refuse the dying request of the Klingon Supreme Commander — and he has already given the order for the two claimants to his position to present themselves here to him. By tradition the two strongest challengers fight for the right of succession, but K'Mpec has a deeper purpose. He actually wants Picard to discover which of the two has killed him. Picard's doubts are pushed aside when K'Mpec tells him that one of the two challengers is Duras, the son of the true traitor and Worf's accuser. K'Mpec justifies his role in that deception by saying that he approved for the glory of the Empire, but now it is just as imperative to find the killer. A Klingon who kills without showing his face has no honour and cannot lead the Empire. Such a Commander would be capable of anything, including war with the Federation. Faced with such prospects Picard accepts the task, and K'Mpec dies.

While the ship awaits the arrival, Alexander has been fighting with the other children and gets a lecture from Worf on how a warrior behaves. He is stunned when the child says that he does not want to be a warrior. When he accuses his mother of not teaching the boy Klingon ways, she says he will find his own ways. Worf demands to know why she did not tell him about the child. Her reason was that he would have insisted that they take the oath, something she had refused to do the last time she was with him. But she seems to have decided that she would no longer refuse such a demand. However, now Worf feels that he must refuse rather than make the boy share his dishonour. That only makes K'Ehleyr all the more curious about what happened on the Klingon home planet. She cannot imagine Worf voluntarily accepting this disgrace by withdrawing his challenge to the charges against his father. Worf will not tell her what happened, nor will Picard when she asks him.

Picard warns Worf that the arrival of the challengers will be a difficult period for him. Worf says that Duras must not be allowed to lead the Council because his father was a traitor, but Picard insists that crime cannot be laid on the son. Duras's crime in the captain's eyes was in laying the blame on Worf. But when Picard tells Worf how K'Mpec was killed the Lieutenant becomes convinced that Duras is the poisoner because "his heart is not Klingon".

Before the challenger can begin Picard and the rival claimants, accompanied by retainers, must perform a gruesome ceremony over K'Mpec's body to prove that he is dead. At the end of the ceremony an explosion rips through the chamber, killing two of the Klingons. Worf visits K'Ehleyr to ensure she was not injured and she admits that she has come to realise that she needs him. He starts to take the oath but stops himself, saying that he cannot allow her to share his suffering. Picard finds ways of delaying the challenge in old Klingon traditions while the investigation of the explosion continues. Geordi and Data discover that the explosive itself was very common but the bomb used a Romulan detonator, a most disturbing fact as it signals a possible fundamental shift of power if a new Klingon/Romulan alliance is in the making.

K'Ehleyr is now determined to discover the truth about Worf's trial and begins a investigation of all available computer records about that event. She is eventually led to the Klingon imperial information records and requests all information on the Khitomer massacre. Duras receives a warning message from home about her researches and confronts her in her quarters. He accuses Worf's father but she has already deduced that it was Duras's father who gave the Romulans the key to lower the defences. She demands to know how he got Worf to take the blame.

Dr Crusher provides the last piece to the puzzle of the explosion. By examining the tissues of the victims she determines that the bomb was actually concealed inside the arm of one of the Klingons. Riker notes that it is considered an honourable death to commit suicide in the service of the Empire. The Klingon in question had been one of Duras's followers. Alexander and Worf return to K'Ehleyr's quarters to find her dying of stab wounds. She lives long enough to accuse Duras and to place her son's hand in Worf's. He tells the boy to look at his dead mother and always remember. While Dr Crusher tries vainly to revive K'Ehleyr, Worf slips away to take an ancient family weapon from its place of honour in his rooms and beams to Duras's ship. Duras denies he has any right to be there until he announces that the dead woman was his mate. He claims a right of vengeance that even Duras must recognise. Duras reminds Worf that only he can prove Worf's innocence — "kill me and you will be a traitor forever." Worf's response is that that is the way it shall be. Riker and Data try to stop Worf but only arrive in time to see him kill Duras.

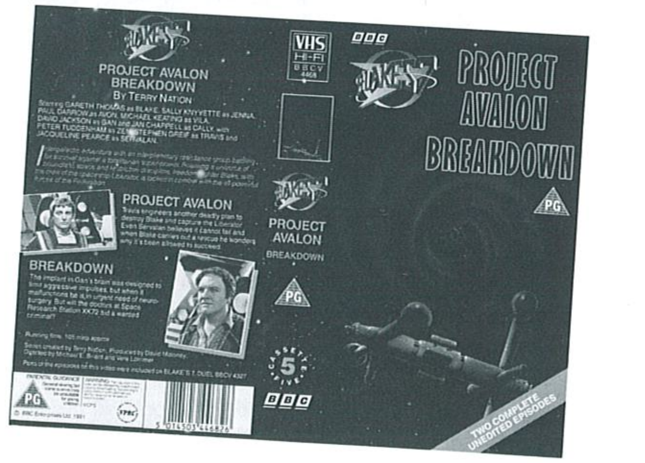
The High Council have no problem in accepting the validity of Worf's action, but Picard does. He tells him that he should resign if he cannot place service to Starfleet above the traditions of his society. Worf chooses not to resign and an official reprimand will be placed on his record. Before he goes Picard asks Worf if the time has not come for the truth about his father to be told. The lie had been told to protect the reputation of Duras's family and that reason is now gone. But Worf reminds him that each member of the High Council had shared in that lie and they will not now be so willing to admit their own fault. The day will come, he says, when he and his brother will convince them to speak the truth.

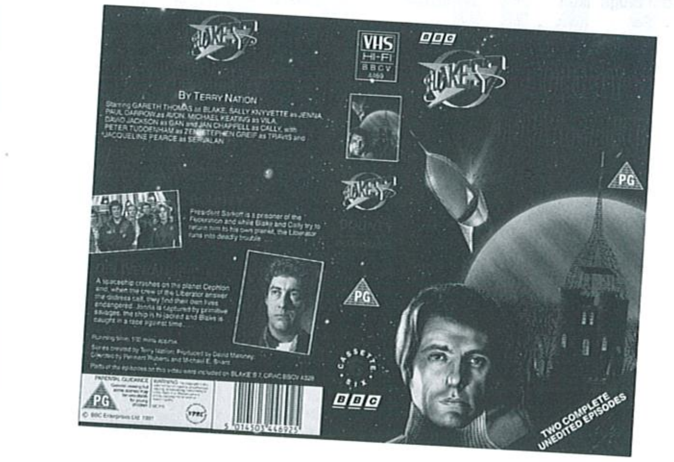
Worf tells Alexander that his human parents will meet them at a Starbase and take him home with them. The boy wants to know why he cannot stay here with Worf, but Worf tells him that he deserves a home and a family, things he cannot give him. He also tells the boy that he is his father and picks him up for the first time.

Ronald Moore quite deliberately made the decision to kill K'Ehleyr knowing that it would create an uproar. He wanted to establish that anything by allowing the death of a popular character. K'Ehleyr has been wonderfully played by Suzie Plakson in the two episodes and the biggest loss is to remove the possibility of her coming back again, at least as this character. She holds the distinction of having appeared as two different aliens on the show in the same season. She was also the Vulcan Dr Selar shown serving on Beverly Crusher's medical staff in SCHIZOID MAN. Although she has not appeared since, Dr Selar has continued to be referred to as serving on board as recently as REMEMBER ME, and was featured as a central character in a recent Next Generation novel, THE EYES OF THE BEHOLDERS. However, being Vulcan, Selar cannot exhibit the wonderful humour that made K'Ehleyr so special and more than a match for Worf when he is being his most Klingon. Special effects supervisor Dan Curry, who has spent time in Tibet, gave Michael Dorn Tai Chi lessons so he would find a technique for using the ancient weapon he demonstrates to Alexander and then uses to dispatch Duras.

Charles Cooper also reprises his role of K'Mpec. While he was massive and tainted with corruption last season, he is even more massive in robes of office this episode while his impending death lends him a dignity more befitting the Klingon who is said to have served as Supreme Commander longer than anyone else in history.

NEXT ISSUE: EPISODES 8-13





Two new Blake's 7 tapes were released by BBC Video at the beginning of March, each containing two episodes.

PROJECT AVALON

One of the better-known Blake's 7 episodes, thanks to the novelisation, *Project Avalon* remains one of the best episodes of the first season.

Beginning with some excellent location work, in blizzard conditions — the planet's atmosphere is supposed to be an implausibly low –180° — and some well-lit caves (echoes of director Michael Briant's earlier foray underground for the Doctor Who story *Revenge of the Cybermen*), *Project Avalon* has an assured handling, especially in its impressive video effects work, which should make some other Blake's 7 directors hang their heads in shame.

Basically another Travis-plans-to-kill-Blake story, *Project Avalon* is quickly developed into a fully rounded episode. It has elements of Federation menace (when Travis picks out long-term Doctor Who stuntman Stuart Fell from the pack of locals you know that he is in for a nasty end!), some wonderfully acerbic wit from Avon (rapidly shaping up as the most interesting of the Liberator crew), and a typically pulp-based SF plot.

But there are weaknesses too : already Gan, Cally and Jenna are being squeezed out and are given very little to do. A truly dreadful performance by Julia Vidler as our eponymous heroine stands out, especially when compared to a good showing from David Bailie as Chevner, who had been given a much more important part in Briant's Doctor Who story *Robots of Death* almost exactly a year earlier.

BREAKDOWN

Set almost entirely on board Liberator, and best remembered as the episode when Gan's violence-inhibiting surgical implant malfunctions, there is little to commend *Breakdown*, routinely directed by Vere Lorrimer.

A very run-of-the-mill script by Nation, some very poor effects work, and pitifully bad sets, featuring the type of awkward banks of buttons and levers that you had hoped had disappeared with Come Back Mrs Noah, add to this story's short-comings.

Few elements go any way towards redeeming the episode : Julian Glover is, as expected, good in a very small role as the neurosurgeon Kane, who refuses to operate on Gan, instead stalling while the Federation closes in. There is some witty banter between Avon and Blake, clear indications of Avon's discontent with the way that Blake is running the ship. When threatened with almost certain death as the Liberator hovers on the brink of a gravitational vortex, Avon tells Blake, "In the unlikely event that we survive this, I'm finished. Staying with you requires a degree of stupidity of which I no longer feel capable."

"Now you're just being modest," replies Blake.

BOUNTY

The first episode on the second of March's two tapes is *Bounty*, a strange episode, showing signs of poor plotting at the expense of some hammy, but eloquent, dialogue.

T.P. McKenna (latterly known to Doctor Who fans as The Captain in *The Greatest Show in the Galaxy*) plays a flamboyant, Quentin Crisp-like character, a former President deposed in a (Federation rigged) vote of no confidence, now wallowing in self-pity and in his treasured collection of 20th century Earth artefacts, a prisoner of the Federation, a broken man. His verbose speeches, refusing Blake's determined attempt to return him to power, slow the episode to a crawl. "You talk too much," he is accused. "It's an occupational hazard," he admits.

Alongside this is a lame sub-story, in which the Liberator is taken over by a handful of Amazon pirates that look like they had just walked off the set of a Turkish Delight advert. That the crew could be subdued by pirates that are later dispatched with ease (one kick!) by Jenna is stretching credulity somewhat.

There are some interesting touches in this episode : Blake's shameful bullying of the President, and a long, suspenseful pause in the sub-story where the viewer does not know what is happening on the Liberator. Regrettably, the story is so full of holes and implausibilities that ultimately it becomes stuffy and boring.

Special mention should be made of Dudley Simpson's wonderful music for this episode. Simpson is one of the series' front-line strengths. Often able to enliven some particularly poor sequences, turning them into watchable television with stylish music, he excels himself in this episode with some of his best and most evocative work.

DELIVERANCE

Reputation, for what it is worth, has this story as neatly dovetailing into the episode that follows it, *Orac*, to form almost a two-part build-up to the end of the series' first season, but freshly viewed *Deliverance* is actually about 60% waffle, 40% hoary plot. Its links with the next episode are tenuous. Any lead it has into *Orac* could easily have been condensed into the first five minutes of that story.

Gan, Vila and, particularly, Avon are given a god-like welcome by a diaphanously-clad female servant, who believes that the visitors are fulfilling "the prophecy" (yawn, yawn). "You're enjoying this, aren't you?" accuses Vila. "Probably," returns Avon, deadpan.

A below-par episode from director Michael Briant, showing an uncharacteristic weakness in the area of model work, and a shameful reliance on unsuitable stock-footage (also faults of his work on *Revenge of the Cybermen*).

The March tapes comprise four very average episodes (certainly none that you would want to show to your friends), with only *Project Avalon* showing any real promise. By now the series is being stifled by crippled scripting work by Terry Nation, an unacceptable reliance on rehashed material, and Nation's formula plotting. Only the camaraderie and witty repartee of the crew are carrying the show at this time. That and the hope that, just around the corner, there may be an episode that the fans could be proud of …

JULIAN KNOTT

'THE FRIGHTENERS'

With the only surviving Season One episode of The Avengers — The Frighteners — confirmed for transmission in Channel 4's forthcoming 30th anniversary Avengers season, we take a look at this episode, which bears little relation to its surviving successors ...

PLOT

Sir Thomas Waller, a wealthy property developer, hires the Deacon to put the frighteners on Jeremy de Willoughby to make him stay away from his daughter Marion. Two thugs are dispatched to beat de Willoughby up on his way home from a restaurant. They are given a message for their victim : "Stay away from the girl."

Steed meets Keel in a taxi and explains a tip-off about the specially arranged beating-up. The two set off for Chelsea to prevent the attack and get sufficient information to put the Deacon away. Meanwhile de Willoughby calls Marion from a restaurant and arranges to meet her when she can get away from her father.

The thugs stake out de Willoughby's house and jump him as he returns, but before they can finish their job Steed and Keel arrive. One of the thugs gets away but Moxon, the brains of the team, gets knocked out in the ensuing struggle. De Willoughby thanks his savers but declines any offer of police involvement. However, his shoulder has been badly hurt in the fight so he and Moxon are taken back to Keel's surgery.

At the surgery Keel checks over de Willoughby while Steed threatens to cut off Moxon's ear if he doesn't talk. De Willoughby leaves in a hurry with Steed in pursuit while Keel convinces Moxon that his neck is broken. Unless he co-operates he will not get treatment. Moxon agrees and Keel fills a syringe with Witch-hazel.

De Willoughby returns to his flat to find his friend Nigel there. He has called round to collect a loan. In the course of the conversation we learn that de Willoughby is only after Marion for her money. The two argue about the loan and Nigel leaves.

Keel is taken by Moxon to the delicatessen that the Deacon uses for a cover. He pretends that his syringe is full of acid and threatens to spray it in the Deacon's face if he does not say who hired him to beat up de Willoughby. The Deacon tells Keel about Sir Thomas Waller.

Steed and Keel meet up back in the taxi to exchange information, while the Deacon goes to Sir Thomas for his payment. Waller declines as he only pays for results. The Deacon threatens him with something nasty before being thrown out.

Steed goes to the delicatessen with the police who hide in waiting for the return of Deacon and his thugs while Keel visits Waller to ask about his use of hired violence. Marion calls de Willoughby to tell him that she is being shipped off round the world on a cruise by her father to get her out of the way. Keel calls on de Willoughby and explains what he knows about the Deacon and why he was hired to frighten him off Marion. He offers to drive the pair up to Scotland so that they can get married.

the AVENGERS
The Frighteners

Meanwhile the Deacon and his thugs have returned to the shop and are arrested.

De Willoughby goes to Keel's house to wait for Marion, who is in the company of Steed, who posed as a chaperon from an escort agency to get her away from her father. Just as the two are united a woman with a strong cockney accent arrives claiming to be de Willoughby's mother. She identifies him by a birthmark on his shoulder. Marion is horrified by his working class origins and is only too ready to leave with Sir Thomas when he arrives to take her away. Steed explains that he has done a little checking-up on de Willoughby and how he makes a living out of fleecing rich women. De Willoughby leaves.

It transpires that the 'mother' is an actress hired by Keel and she knew about the birthmark because Keel noticed it when he examined de Willoughby's shoulder after the fight.

PRODUCTION

By modern standards this episode looks very stagey. The camera work is restricted to the barest minimum and although this is partly due to the technology of the day, the main problem is the sets. Many are so small that anything other than close-ups would have been impossible. Even the larger ones, mainly the "exteriors", are so poorly constructed that to show them in any detail would have been disastrous. It is therefore little wonder that all the "exteriors" feature nocturnal action, thus getting round the problems of lighting the badly-painted flats that are supposed to pass as Chelsea.

The tight camera work results in producing a claustrophobic atmosphere which enhances some scenes, but the overall lack of visual depth frustrates the action as well as the eye. Also the very obvious stage-hand stepping out of sight in a sequence leading up to a fight only goes to compound the low-budget feel of the production.

Stock footage is used for the establishing shots of office buildings, the West End and the Soho street markets. These sequences work well enough, as does the incidental music which is mercifully nothing like the main theme. The Dankworth opening score, which in a slightly-changed format served the first three seasons, always sounds like it is on the brink of collapse with no discernible melodic or rhythmic hook. The decision to change it with the introduction of Emma Peel must be one of the wisest moves in the show's history.

Although pre-recorded, each of the episode's three sections were performed live to camera without the benefits of post-production or editing. The time-clocks and voice-overs at the start of each segment state quite clearly the take number (ie. three separate videoed recording blocks).

Avengers' London is full of Steed's spies and look-outs. During the episode we get to meet five of them, all of whom could have walked straight out of a pea-souper in a fifties Hollywood rendition of what American cinema believed our capital to be like. We get the cocky cab driver, the old lady cockney flower seller, the well-spoken doorman in his bow tie, the black bus conductor and a street cleaner. All melt into the shadows after delivering their one-liners and all speak in keeping with their stereotype.

The simplistic characterisation also spreads across the principals. The thugs have a vocabulary that is often comical :

"It's like this Deacon. I'm out on ticket, see. One lumbering on my present form and I'll be eatin' porridge till it's comin' out me flippin' ear 'oles."

This also goes for the police, the Italian delicatessen owner, the brainless deb and her bullying father. All seem straight out of Dick Barton or Tintin.

However, Steed and Keel work far better. An obvious rapport exists between Macnee and Hendry and their scenes together are often charged with an element of humour or antagonism that the other actors are unable to muster. Even the normally-reliable Stratford Johns does little more than shout his way through his scenes.

The overall feel is very dated, but even in this early form a good deal of the Avengers mythology already exists. The ever-popular shop, fronting for something sinister; the tip-offs from nowhere; and of course the Edwardian John Steed.

The print is certainly good enough to broadcast in Channel 4's forthcoming season — a fascinating document of the Hendry years, and sadly the only one.

ANTHONY CLARK

Steed and Mrs Peel

THE GOLDEN GAME
In Which Steed Breaks the Rules
And Emma Gets a Full House

written by Grant Morrison
drawn by Ian Gibson
published by Acme/Eclipse

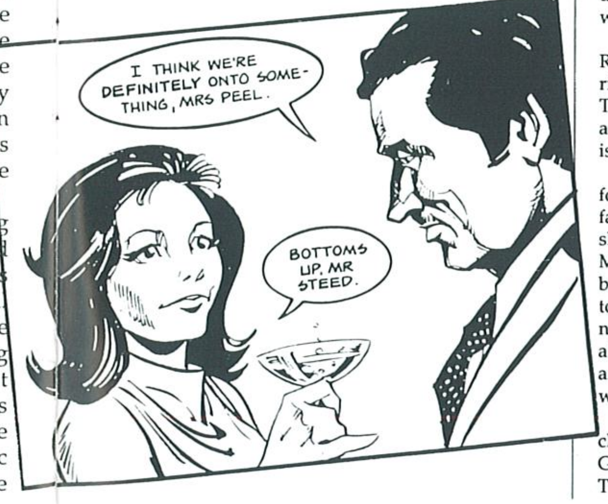
IF YOU don't count their fleeting appearance at a funeral in DC's much maligned comic book version of The Prisoner, it's been a while since John Steed, Emma Peel and Tara King appeared in graphic art form. *TV Comic* saw Steed and Mrs Peel within its pages from October 1965 to May 1966, and then the suave agent returned with Tara King and Mother in October 1968 to run through to December 1971. During the second run, the likenesses were usually captured by John Canning, the artist on the Doctor Who strip for many years, but the nature of his work became increasingly hurried and the features of Patrick Macnee seemed to prove elusive. Fleetway's *June* comic for girls ran an Emma Peel strip during 1966, and 1967 had The Avengers featuring in D.C. Thomson's *Diana*. This latter item was a colour strip which quite faithfully captured the spirit of the series as Steed and Mrs Peel battled a bizarre range of baddies over 26 weeks. Aside from strips in both The Avengers and *TV Comic* annuals (plus an outing for Dr Keel and Steed in *TV Crimebusters*), 1966 had also seen Thorpe & Porter issue a one-off black and white special under the title of *The Avengers No. 1*, and November 1968 saw Gold Key's one-off colour comic book entitled *John Steed — Emma Peel.*

It was the possible confusion with the noted comic superheroes created by Marvel Comics that also forced the title of *Steed and Mrs Peel* onto this latest three-book offering from Acme Press/Eclipse Books. Even as this review is being written, there is still only a preview copy of the first issue's artwork in black and white to comment upon. Although the artwork was first shown to eager Avengerphiles as far back as the 'Wish You Were Here' convention last June, and accompanied by assurances that issue one would hit the comic specialist's shelves in October 1990, the final product has still to materialise in real life, irregular publication being a tragic truth behind nearly any small-time printing venture.

Now, finally, with assurances that the comic will be out by the time you read this (honest), the said preview copy has arrived. At a first glance through it can only be said that the likenesses of our heroes by Ian Gibson are a severe disappointment. Patrick Macnee is not an easy person to draw (and this is said through bitter, personal experience), as John Canning found twenty years ago. The Steed depicted in this first issue of the new work is attempted in a variety of styles, but most often is reduced to long-shots where his bowler-and-brolly silhouette speaks for itself. In close-up he looms in doorways like some hard-nosed thug, or spends time with his features hidden by shadows.

Mrs Peel fairs a bit better — but this is no Diana Rigg. She's wearing the right clothes, adopts the right poses ... but it's not the right face somehow. That said, Ian Gibson's artwork is quite stylized — and the artistic licence taken to convey Emma's looks is within the bounds of acceptability.

It is doubtful that artistic licence was responsible for the realisation of Mother in the image of a stone-faced Robert Morley as opposed to the more jovial shape of the late and much missed Patrick Newell. Most probably the chance to depict Steed's crippled boss the way he appeared on screen has been denied to Ian Gibson by Newell's family, but he's there nevertheless, still being wheeled round by the silent aide-de-camp known as Rhonda (whose slender anatomy is clad in a far kinkier manner than it ever was in the series!).


I THINK WE'RE DEFINITELY ONTO SOME-THING, MRS PEEL.
BOTTOMS UP, MR STEED.

The most successful rendering of a television character without doubt is that of Tara King, where Gibson has caught the bewigged look of Linda Thorson from episodes shot over Winter/Spring 1968 perfectly. Her looks, clothes and mannerisms are perfect ... it's just a pity that she goes missing on page 4, robbing the reader of her pleasant company for the rest of the issue.

The first glance through the book also shows us that while the heavy stylized artwork occasionally lets the main characters down, it does allow a quite stunning supporting cast of wackos and weirdos which couldn't be equalled by even the best of 1960s character actors available to ABC. The old sea dog and naval security officer Admiral Fanshawe, Fanshawe's eye-patched retainer, the luckless designer of the board game 'Chutes and Serpents', the mysterious Mr Bird ... all delightfully trip their way on an off the pages. Page layout too is an imaginative marvel, allowing even more way-out settings that the budget Messrs Clemens and Fennell had to play with. Fanshawe's home, packed with games and nautical memorabilia, is a prime example of this grand display of imagination. The images of clubs, anchors and crowns which permeate through the instalment are also pleasingly interwoven with the artwork.

It's when you start to read this book, however, that the most enjoyment is found, and even the dubious likeness of the heroes ceases to matter. Grant Morrison's script for this new story, entitled *The Golden Game,* is quite superb and shows a great empathy for the original ABC filmed series. It's a pity that back in the 1960s the mysterious John Garforth didn't have this affinity for his subject, otherwise his four paperback books from Panther might have been considerably more readable. The story so far shows great promise, and indeed includes elements directly from episodes such as Richard Harris' notable *Game* and Robert Banks Stewart's *The Master Minds*. As usual with The Avengers, there's a series of murders and disappearances. Once again, Steed visits Mother in his strangely located HQ (although I don't think ABC would have had the guts to have it beneath a men's urinal as Acme do here!) and there's a traitor in the department, so only Steed can be trusted. As usual, there's some wonderfully witty banter : *"You know me; I'm like an abacus, Mother,"* says Steed. *"Good show Steed! I knew I could count on you ..."* replies his wheelchair-bound boss.

The story is presumably set at the end of the 1960s during Tara King's tenure as Steed's sidekick, although her disappearance — and the grisly encounter between 'Foggy' Fanshawe and an anchor — require Steed to call in reinforcements. Back at 3 Stable Mews (perfectly depicted and straight from the colour episodes), he finds a children's riddle book left for him and gets on the phone to say those immortal words *"Mrs Peel? We're needed."* With Peter Peel out in the Amazon Basin, Mrs Peel is free to go adventuring again with her husband's lookalike, and soon there are clues aplenty and a nice range of murders thrown in along the way. There's also the obligatory organisation to which all these wackos associated with the plot belong, in this case the Palamedes Club for game designers.

The settings are pure Sixties : London, cosy English pubs, secluded churchyards and picnics in the charming countryside. Re-reading these first two chapters (*Crown & Anchor* and *Hare & Hounds*), it's quite captivating and one can only hope that the colouring has been done carefully ... and that when Acme finally release the books on a regular basis the remaining two chapters — plus their solo Mrs Peel story — live up to this very promising beginning.

However, I think I'll also be keeping an eye on Millenium's excellent *The Wild Wild West*. The artwork and settings here aren't as stylized ... but at least the characters do resemble the faces I know so well from the TV screen!

ANDREW PIXLEY

Too Many Targets
by John Peel and Dave Rogers

AT LAST ... all the Avengers together in one book, doing what they're best at ... Avenging with style.

Well, it's not as simple as that I'm afraid. The >

whole plot seems somewhat convoluted — the closest thing I can compare it to is the Doctor Who story *The Five Doctors*. Although there are many Avengers characters and regulars in the story, they tend to suffer by being there just to please the respective fan following of the series, and not because the given plot cries out for them to appear. Steed, being the lynchpin of the series, naturally gets the lion's share of the action, and as such his character comes off the best, but he seems to have developed James Bond's flair for witty one-liners in the face of danger — indeed, the authors go to great lengths in the first couple of chapters to distance the events in 'Avengerland' from "that fictional fellow with the double-O prefix".

Of the other Avengers, only Emma Peel seems to have any of her old character about her, with seemingly great pains taken to paint her as superior to her successor — who for some reason seems to have gotten on the wrong side of Avengers fans, and the authors in particular, which is a shame as I found Tara to be my personal favourite partner to Steed from the original sixties series.

To be honest, the only Avengers episodes that I have seen (thanks to Channel 4) are the Rigg/Thorson series and (thanks to Tellycon) a solitary Honor Blackman episode. So for the characters of Cathy Gale and David Keel, I've had to rely solely on Dave Rogers' two terrific Avengers books, and various issues of the 'On Target' fanzine. Unfortunately, *Too Many Targets* doesn't help to clarify these two characters, and as a result they both seem very two-dimensional. This is not helped by the authors' total lack of description given to any of the characters — a crime usually only committed by many of the Doctor Who novelisations.

In fact, the whole book seems slightly shallow, which is a shame as it could have been so much better with more thought and attention to detail. The writing style of John Peel, so rightly praised for his three Dalek books, seems to have taken a turn for the worst when not novelising someone else's work, which doesn't bode well for his up-and-coming *Timewyrm* instalment *[see elsewhere this issue]*. Although the book is credited to two authors, I get the feeling that Dave Rogers' input into the story was restricted to an advisory capacity, merely to make sure that every last detail fitted in with accepted Avengers lore.

And so on to the plot itself ... The book starts promisingly enough, set in the period after the end of the original sixties series, but before The New Avengers, with two British agents being bumped off in a slightly familiar way. When one of the suspects turns out to be Mother (Steed's boss), Steed is put on the case to "terminate" him if he turns out to be a double agent. Things start getting complicated when Mother summons Tara King to tell her a similar story about Steed. By a series of convoluted plot twists, Emma Peel, Cathy Gale and David Keel get drawn into the plot to wreak havoc on the British Secret Service. Things start to move from implausible to improbable when the protagonists turn out to be the good ol' Cybernauts (who else in an epic Avengers novel?) which leads to a climax that is riddled with clichés and is over so quickly that you can't help wondering if it was all worth it.

The American publishers, St Martin's Press (yes, the same people responsible for "The Official Doctor Who and the Daleks Book") continue their trend of producing books with weird dimensions, making this a book that stands out on your bookcase, for all the wrong reasons.

With the prospect of more Avengers books to follow (how about one with Steed meeting Purdey and Gambit for the first time ...?), I can only hope that a sharp improvement in quality occurs. Okay, so the book isn't as bad as the five Berkley Medallion Avengers books that came out of America in the late sixties, but it is by no means a literary masterpiece.

RICHARD MOLESWORTH

TOO MANY TARGETS by John Peel and Dave Rogers
St Martin's Press (USA), 181pp; ISBN 0 312 05003 8
$8.95 (US), approx £6.50 – £6.95 (UK).

PLANET OF THE SPIDERS

MAY 1974. Doctor Who, before the great dislocation of the Saward/Baker era, is still one vast, complete story. The Doctor, fleeing from his own people, had been caught and sentenced to exile on Earth. The big question, with Pertwee about to leave, is : what will happen now?

The character of the Doctor had been continually developed over the last ten years, seemingly changed by his contact with humans. He had evolved from the frosty old curmudgeon that was Hartnell, through the user-friendly young/old rebel that was Troughton, to Pertwee's benevolent, institutionalised (in both senses of the word) patronising father-figure. As would happen with the Doctor's mystical resurrection in the face of entropy seven years later, the production team of Barry Letts and Terrance Dicks had decided that a regeneration should be meaningful in terms of both Who's ongoing story and the continuing characterisation of the Doctor. (In many ways, this has been the problem with latter-day regenerations; they've lacked any grand significance.) So here, the parameters of the Pertwee Doctor were going to be under the microscope. As in any resurrection myth, the moment before death is the moment when the hero is defined. Here, we were given a drama that presented us with pure Pertwee, a synopsis of his era, that criticised his CV, with the hero himself understanding his sins and, through sacrifice, transcending them.

Ladies and gentlemen ... *Planet of the Spiders.*

"When the kids had killed the man I had to break up the band ..."

In July 1974, David Bowie's *Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* finally dropped out of the album charts, having lived there, snarling at the neighbours, for nearly two years.

The Spiders from Mars. What a great name. In your mind, you get a quick image that nearly amounts to a story. Alien spiders, intelligent and evil. Almost demons. The image has a hint of pulp SF too. We might imagine a paperback cover, with, say ... a huge spider perched on a young woman's back.

You can sum up loads of Pertwee stories (and Hinchcliffe ones, which took on most of the Pertwee imagery wholesale) in one image : reptile men rising from the sea; dummies breaking out of shop windows; Daleks appearing out of thin air. It's these moments that the public mean when they talk about *real* Doctor Who. Of course, since Mary Whitehouse came on the scene, nobody's been able to do this sort of thing ... but I digress. Robert Sloman was a writer who understood archetypal imagery. His style suited the Letts/Dicks concept of Who as mythic confrontation so well that he'd provided the finales for the three previous seasons : *The Green Death, The Time Monster* and (with Letts himself) *The Dæmons.* All of them, except perhaps Monster, with its somewhat flabby lack of focus, suitable candidates for video.

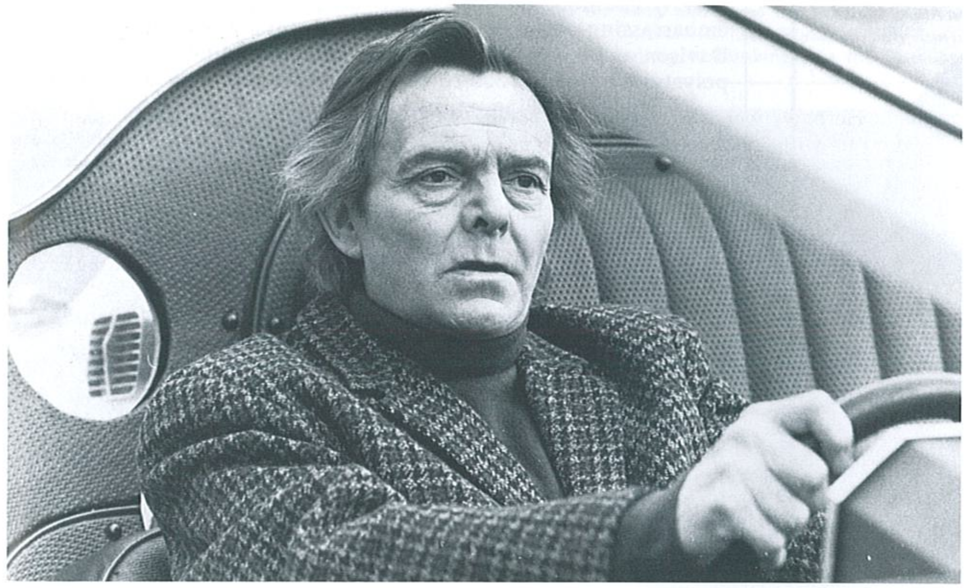
So, that was point one in the construction of the story : a great image, a 'Bear' as Joseph Stefano used to call it. Point two was that the 'Bear' in question was more than a monster. It had, for possibly the first time in Who, a significance beyond itself. Letts has often talked about the Doctor going "inside the mountain" of his soul to be sacrificed and emerge as the "new man". The Spiders had a role in this mythic undercurrent too. They are rampant egos, fighting amongst themselves, and displaying chilling cruelty to their victims ("say please ..." one orders Lupton). As K'Anpo says, "We are all apt to submit ourselves to domination ... not all spiders sit on the back." The Spiders, afraid of how weak they are in the cold light of reason, even deny their own names, insisting on the term 'eight-legs'. Spiders, after all, are useful in a normal ecosystem. Like egos, it's only when they get big that they're a problem.

Lupton, a failed businessman, has fled from the chains of his ego, only to find them drawing tighter. He submits willingly to the Spider, and finds himself thinking grandiose, despotic thoughts. His later actions show him to be in the best tradition of Pertwee villains, men who know exactly what they're doing, but got to where they are through horribly human failings. Finally, Lupton's ego eats him. Everyone ignores the simple Tommy, who has the answer in his pocket and stages his own resurrection (as does K'Anpo) to demonstrate how to be pure. (But he's got a lead on them, with no ego and a rock and roll name.) "You're just like everybody else," says Sarah. "I sincerely hope not," says Tommy, getting the best line too.

The Doctor's ego is also out of control, ignoring Sarah, getting Professor Clegg killed in his dilettante psychic experiments ("my greed for knowledge"), and basically displaying all the paternalistic traits that so annoy modern viewers. That he is to be criticised for this, and killed for it, is surely a huge testament to Letts' helmsmanship of the show. The Doctor's disquiet before K'Anpo is a revealing moment that shows that even he has a monkey (or a Spider) on his back. Even the Doctor must submit to his own principles.

The final thread in the construction of the story is continuity. That wonderful sense of the continuing story that was almost invented in the Letts era. Mike Yates returns to perform no function in terms of plot, Jo is heard from, and the Doctor's guru from *Time Monster* actually appears. There's even a nod to Delgado, his widow, Kismet, playing one of the Spider voices. (Though I doubt, as some have said, that this story was originally planned for the Master. The whole point is that Lupton's villainy is all too human.) The seeds of the future are also sown. Harry Sullivan is called on the phone, and doesn't arrive until the next story, and Pertwee stages a 'death and resurrection' scene that was to become a Baker speciality.

Images of Earth abound, from the opening scene of cows grazing, the Doctor calling the Brigadier "Alistair", and the strange idea of the two of them going out to a variety show. Yet the world of Metebelis Three is very close to Earth, just around the corner. As Sarah says, the alien world is just as real as Liverpool Docks. The Doctor hops back and forth in the TARDIS and there is no sense of vast distance as displayed in *The Three Doctors.* The worlds are two sides to the same coin, and the story concentrates on the metaphor of the two halves of the brain. The Metebelis crystal is "perfectly balanced ... the left and right". On Earth, one set of aliens has set up a patriarchal, left-brained, Dionysian community, which is being subverted by Appolonian rebels. (And they really are Appolonian, demanding only that the Spiders treat them with a bit more justice, and that things should be a bit more fair, if the eight-legs don't mind, that is ...) This division of the soul even works its way into such details as the Professor's talent (his true self is becoming what his false self was) and the Brigadier's reaction to the belly dancer ("extraordinary muscular control" is his hypocritical, Appolonian explanation for his Dionysian reactions). As Cho Je says, "the world of appearance is the world of change."



"So where were the spiders?"

Of course, the story has its faults. The main one is the actual lack of Spiders. Their presence is felt throughout, through such chilling motifs as the cocoons and their lust for eating humans, but there really aren't enough of them, nor are the effects that convincing. Also, there is obviously a great deal of padding to the story. The chase scene, which takes up most of episode two, is duller than something very dull indeed. The main change Hinchcliffe brought to the show was to not necessarily equate the meaningful with the long. Stories like Deadly Assasin and Pyramids of Mars work because they're stripped to the bone, and I'm sorry to say that I think Sloman would have had difficulty writing like that.

There's a strange sense of offhandness, also. The Metebelis sequences aren't nearly as effective as those on Earth, because the alien planet is introduced in such a relaxed manner. The narrative really becomes patchy and strung-together, with little thought of focus or narrative drive, before we rev up for the archetypally powerful ending. All these elements speak of 'four parter made up to six' syndrome, but I've no evidence for this. Barry Letts' direction is workmanlike, but there are moments of excellence, such as the would-be tractor collision and Sarah's teleportation to Metebelis. Acting honours go to John Dearth, who makes Lupton terribly human, and more frightening that the Spiders could ever be, and John Kane, whose Tommy is accurate, touching and totally believable. Joanna Munro on the other hand is farcically OTT as Rega, and none of the villagers manages to be more than forgettable.

The climax is, of course, a real tear-jerker for nostalgic fans. The Doctor faces his fear, and quite deliberately sacrifices himself, not even allowed the heroism of a heroic death. (The crystal would have destroyed the Great One whenever she got it.) His return to Earth, having been "wandering in the vortex" (what a great line, full of the mystery that was about to return to the character) is because the TARDIS "brought him home", not Gallifrey, that is, but Earth. Facing his fear was more important than just going on living, and in this story we've seen what living was to the Pertwee Doctor; all the trappings of family, adventure and the great moment where he quite seriously greets a Spider with royal respect. That's what makes the Doctor a different sort of hero, really, that he can treat other cultures with huge respect, that he fights not for a country or faction, but for a principle, around and within himself. Of course, fighting for principles builds an ego, and, seeing this, he elects to destroy it, his personal morality triumphing over his external morals. He has discovered that it is actually Earth which is the kingdom of ego, the real Planet of the Spiders.

"Where there's life there's ..." And he doesn't get to say "hope". As Sabor says, lying in his cocoon, "One is only frightened when there is still hope."

The Third Doctor dies without hope, and thus he dies fearless.

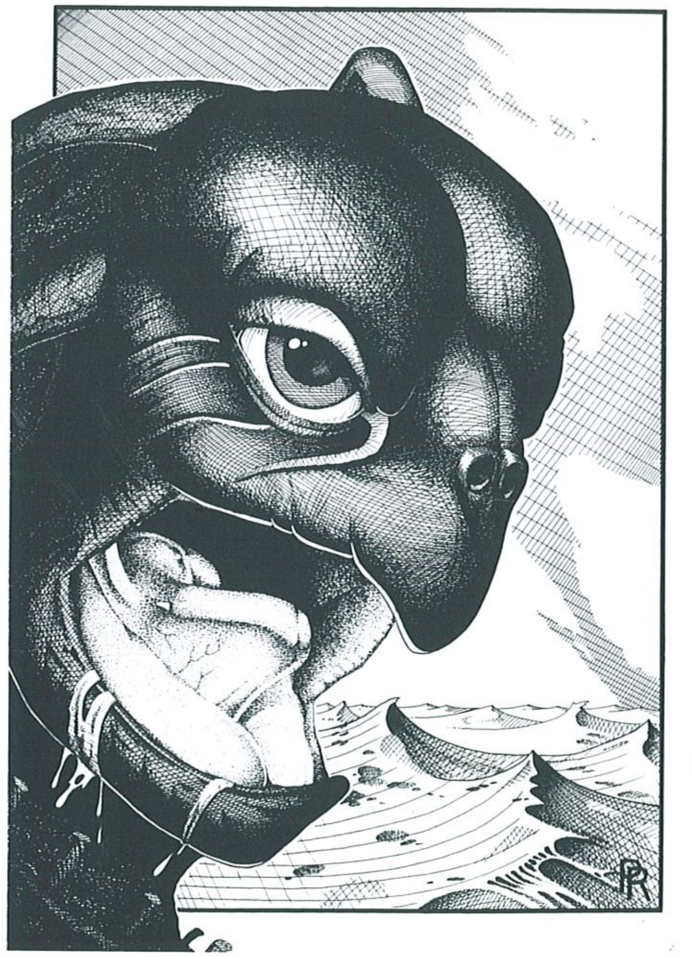
Planet of the Spiders will be released by BBC Video in April.

PAUL CORNELL

Horns of a Dilemma: WARRIORS (ON THE CHEAP)

WARRIORS OF THE DEEP is often cited as a prime example of all that is wrong with John Nathan-Turner's brand of Doctor Who. However, practically all of the derogatory comments made on this story refer to its (admittedly shaky) production values. As most Doctor Who fans seem to regard the plot as the main contributor to a story's success or otherwise, it seems strange to me that none of these critics seem to acknowledge *Warriors'* strong, solid storyline.

Now I am the first to admit that *Warriors* isn't, by any stretch of the imagination, a towering classic. The story offers few, if any, new or innovative concepts which have since become part of Who mythology. It is simply a straightforward action/adventure tale with no plot holes or unnecessary complexities.



Such a story is suitable with which to open a season. *Castrovalva* was not a 'traditional' action story, but maintained the viewers' interest with the introduction of the first new Doctor for seven years. *Warriors'* task was to grab the viewers with an exciting story, and persuade them to tune in to the more thoughtful stories later in the season. It succeeded where *Battlefield*, which made the mistake of concentrating totally on action without so much of a hint of a plot, failed.

That said, the story wasn't simply an exercise in zap-pow action sequences. There is a careful building up of tension in the first episode. This is a world of the fairly near future, a paranoid world split into two blocs which are permanently on the edge of war. The superb model shots frequently remind us that the base is deep below the surface, which helps create a sense of claustrophobia. Many have criticised the Sea Base's bright sparkling interior as lacking atmosphere, and would have preferred the dank, rusting and water-dripping environment described in Johnny Byrne's original script. Come on now! This is a military base on constant guard against aggression from the opposite bloc and thus highly advanced and strict on discipline. Its personnel are hardly likely to allow it to decay into a rusting heap, are they? The model shots provide the atmosphere, as does the dark, gloomy interior of the Silurian vessel and Jonathan Gibbs's eerie underwater incidentals.

Of course the cardinal sin this story committed in the eyes of the fans was its "disgraceful" treatment of the Sea Devils and Silurians. Unlike the Cybermen in recent years, the Sea Devils seemed virtually invincible as they penetrated the base — a contrast to the originals which were seen to be shot left, right and centre by the Navy using mere rifles. The new Samurai-style costumes were far more in keeping with the futuristic environment than string vests would have been, and the moving eyelids were a subtle and effective touch (unlike the Destroyer who, although quite impressive, snorted, frowned and dribbled to the point of overkill!). All right, perhaps the new uniforms did result in them being rather too slow and shuffling, but they are by no means the worst example of a lumbering Doctor Who monster (that honour must surely go to the Mandrells!). The Silurians were used, rather effectively, as the brains of the operation, and their new look was perfectly acceptable.

As for the story's other monstrous species ... well, I won't even try to deny that the Myrka is absolutely appalling. It has become a cliché to compare it to a pantomime horse, and it just about pips the Skarasen, the giant rat and the Magma creature to the post as the worst ever example of an oversized Who monster. The scene where the Myrka breaks through the bulkhead and the huge polystyrene door flops as it falls onto Tegan is the second most embarrassing scene of the story. I genuinely felt pity for Peter Davison as he tried to convince us that he couldn't lift a lump of polystyrene which wobbled violently the moment he touched it!

While I'm dwelling on the negative aspects, I must admit there were a few other poor visuals (the Airfix Sentinel Six spaceship being one), and the direction hardly made the best of the situation. Pennant Roberts's direction is at best competent, at worst boring — I can't recall a single big close-up, or much camera movement during action scenes. With someone like David Maloney or Alan Wareing in charge, the story could have been far better thought of than it is today ...

There were no memorable, Robert Holmes-type characters amongst the cast. We were presented with mainly stereotypes, albeit reasonably well-acted stereotypes. The exception to this is, of course, Ingrid Pitt, whose performance is as dreadful as it was in *The Time Monster*. And yes, her infamous decision to suddenly commit suicide by karate-kicking the dear old Myrka beats the flopping bulkhead door as the most embarrassing scene of all.

Luckily we have one of the best ever TARDIS teams to help rise above such problems. Davison's Doctor had been given an extra dose of eccentricity, a great improvement on the watery character of his first two seasons. People who criticise the Fifth Doctor for lacking character should watch any Season 21 story. He brings a gentle humour with his slightly daffy ways, which is far more palatable than Tom Baker playing hopscotch for no apparent reason in *The Invasion of Time*. Together with Janet Fielding's brash but caring Tegan and Mark Strickson's delightfully sneaky and selfish Turlough, they create a wonderful chemistry.

The final episode is full of tension, particularly as the Doctor links with the synch device in a desperate attempt to stop the countdown. The conclusion is refreshingly downbeat; not only has virtually the entire Sea Base personnel been massacred, but the last of what the Doctor sees as a noble and civilized race has been wiped out. All right, perhaps the hexachromite gas was a bit too convenient, but at least it was given a mention earlier in the story. Davison is seen with black bruises/burn marks around his eyes; a realistic touch — too often we see the Doctor in terrible pain, but rarely do we see any visible form of injury afterwards. As he mutters "There should have been another way," surrounded by lifeless bodies, there is no feeling of victory, just a bleak sensation of waste.

There we are, I've made my defence. As I said before, *Warriors of the Deep* is no classic, just a good, archetypal Doctor Who story which provided a strong start to one of the finest ever seasons. It also presented a variety of tense and exciting moments, and a conclusion which actually made the viewer think.

JOHN WRIGHT

RIGHT OF REPLY : DEFYING THE HORNS OF NIMON

WHY IS IT that of all the Doctor Who stories ever made, *The Horns of Nimon* is one of those three or four that supposedly represent the nadir of the programme? Probably because it *is*!

Let's get one thing clear from the start. *The Horns of Nimon* is quite simply not Doctor Who. What it is though is Doctor Who pretending to be a Christmas pantomime (and not a JNT in sight around the producer's chair!). Shown between December 22nd and January 12th this story was for all means and purposes the first story of the 1980s: in many ways it was a taster of what was to come ...

Admittedly the story was not meant to be the season's climax but, with *Shada* postponed due to a strike at the BBC, *Horns* was forced to take its place. In his article Defending *The Horns of Nimon* in DWB #83, Andrew Lawrence claims that *Horns* was only supposed to be a kind of hors d'oeurve to *Shada*. This does not bear examination. Having viewed *Shada* on several occasions, albeit in its unfinished format with graphic text in place of missing scenes, I can honestly say that it does not live up to all the myths and legends that have been built up around it. As the final story of Season 17 it cannot be classed among other finales like *The Reign of Terror*, *Evil of the Daleks* or *The Caves of Androzani*. For all its faults, *Horns* at least seemed to be on a par with *Shada*. Treating *Horns* as an hors d'oeurve implies that it was not supposed to be as good as *Shada*. Every producer, be it Verity Lambert or JNT, is there to make sure that every story is of the highest possible quality available. I can hardly imagine Graham Williams and Douglas Adams sitting around a table with Tony Read and Kenny McBain deciding that *Horns* should be of an inferior quality to *Shada* (whether *Shada* was being written by Douglas Adams or not!). Even in the days before Doctor Who was reduced to only 14 episodes per year there was no place for any kind of 'inconsequential filler'.

The main fault of *Horns* was the appalling acting that haunted the entire production. Even the regulars, with the possible exception of Lalla Ward, were going to town and treating the 'pantomime' as some kind of funny joke. Tom Baker positively revelled in his ham interpretation of the Doctor, probably at his worst at the end of episode one as he affectionately hugs K9 while the papier-maché ball (sorry, massive asteroid) hurtles towards the TARDIS.

The aforementioned Lalla Ward comes out of this malady almost unscathed. Indeed we are treated to a rare glimpse of Romana's independent intelligence when she and the Doctor are repairing the engines on the prison ship. The Doctor offers Romana the use of his sonic-screwdriver, to which she calmly replies, "Oh that's all right, I've got my own." After the Doctor examines the new screwdriver he hands it back to Romana ... but Romana notices the swap and gives the Doctor his screwdriver back in return for hers. Romana's only downfall is her naïvity in thinking that the Skonnons will help her find the Doctor and not believe their pilot's story of sabotage. Ah well, nobody's perfect!

Janet Ellis (and here's one we made earlier) has virtually nothing to do throughout the story with her character Teka. Occasionally she would blurt out "Seth's very brave" and "Seth's going to kill the Nimon". The fact that Seth looks like Adrian Mole without the glasses is irrelevant ...

Then there's Soldeed. Quite simply Soldeed is the worst character since Zaroff in *The Underwater Menace*, and in some ways even exceeds those depths. I have no doubt that Graham Crowden thoroughly enjoyed himself with his 'amateur operatic' performance. His appearance gives him the role of pantomime baddie (Oh no it doesn't! Oh yes it does! etc.). His 'death' scene was, in a word, pathetic. How is it possible to be shot down by a Nimon, be in mortal pain, and still *laugh*?!? Very, very pantomimesque.

Above all, the plot was a blatant rip-off of the Minotaur legend. Fair enough, it was in space and it featured a few 'new' elements to make it Who-esque, but overall it was just a very long and very tiring rerun of *The Time Monster* episodes 5 and 6. As for Andrew Lawrence's suggestion that *Horns* stands head and shoulders above anything else in Season 17, may I suggest that he look more closely at *Nightmare of Eden* or *Creature from the Pit*? If this still fails to impress then slot into the video recorder *City of Death*. This is without doubt the best story of Season 17, if not the entire history of the programme.

STUART REEKIE

DWB received one unsolicited review of DWAS's recent one-day event held to mark the release of the CURSE OF FENRIC *video ...*

Please note, as with all items in DWB, the opinions contained in this article are the writer's own, and are not intended to be representative of editorial policy.

WOLFTIME

"Doctor Who is dead, long live the Doctor." This seems to be the current atmosphere surrounding the programme, especially upon meeting fans at various events during the last few months of 1990, and with that one would have imagined that the amount of conventions would have died also. Not so, however, cried the likes of Manopticon and Nebula, who feature this year, as well as a myriad of less competitive one-day events. The first of these, organised by Andrew Beech and the DWAS, occurred on February 10th, on a cold, snowy day at the BAFTA centre, Piccadilly.

After walking by the main entrance twice, the A5 "ticket"-cum-map being less than useless at best, I arrived two hours after the event was due to start. After attempting to pick up my non-existent convention booklet, surely a necessary souvenir at any event, I had a browse round the merchandise corner. With John Fitton noticeable by his absence, having cancelled the day before, it contained one dealer and Mediaband, still trying to flog a large amount of surplus paperbacks from the States. Thus with great anticipation I continued upstairs to where the main auditorium was showing various stories on video, one from each Doctor.

I had fortunately missed *The Abominable Snowmen* 2, although I caught *Fendahl* 3, which turned black-and-white halfway through, and when *Ultimate Foe* 2 was shown I simply walked out, along with half the audience. This gave us an opportunity to inspect the displays, "set up in conjunction with BBC Enterprises", which was in fact a load of *Fenric* video covers, artfully placed on a display board. That took me all of five seconds to inspect.

After lunch the event started, and I do mean started, at 2pm with the first two episodes of *Fenric* introduced by John Nathan-Turner. The episodes were shown on a cinema-sized screen, and extremely good it was too. I'm sure that if I had bought the video a week beforehand my enthusiasm may have been slightly more contained. After the two episodes Andrew Beech interviewed both Sylvester McCoy and Nicholas Parsons, a panel that many a convention over the last year has tried to set up and surely a credit to the DWAS, which gave more than a hint with its Sale of the Century line at Panopticon X. Unfortunately they blew it by having the dynamic duo up on stage for some twenty minutes only, and later I found out that both had departed, Nicholas to his play and Sylvester presumably to miss the autograph queue at the end of the day! Both Nicholas and Sylvester exhibited great enthusiasm for the extended release, but when asked about returning to the show Sylvester shocked the audience by announcing that his association with the show was over, and that he now wanted to get on with his career. He was however adamant that the show would return in one form or another, and that only time would tell.

Next came a behind-the-scenes production panel. Mark Ayres, always interesting to the more musically-minded, had very little new to say, but did reveal that an independent company would, hopefully, soon be releasing his three scores in album form. Meanwhile Susan Moore and Stephen Mansfield were quizzed about the creation of the Haemovores, the centrepiece of this panel being a recreation of the Ancient One's head and the other four Haemovore masks that were on display.

After the final two episodes of Fenric, Nathan-Turner took to the stage to interview Nick Mallet, Ian Fraser and Ian Briggs (who this time was sober). During this panel Ian Fraser, the production assistant on many stories over the years, sat back unnoticed while Nathan-Turner was hit by a barrage of questions concerning his involvement with BBC Video.

The final panel took place 22 minutes later when Andrew Beech, Sophie Aldred and a bearded Tomek Borrk took to the stage. Both were highly entertaining and their on-screen comradeship came to the fore during this panel. However, due to "time restrictions" they were soon shuttled off to make way for a fast raffle and plug for the next Panopticon, which apparently certain members of the audience had asked to see. Quite frankly those members of the audience who clapped at every possible moment, setting the rest of the audience off like so many drug-induced sheep, looked suspiciously like the rest of the DWAS exec ...

When it came to the end of the day, the obvious mis-management of time was apparent. Some 150 fans queued in an attempt to get autographs only to be told by the co-ordinator that one autograph from each guest on a single item was the order of the day. This rather miffed 150 people, most of whom simply put up with the excuse that the lights were about to go out and were shuttled out with all the delicacy of a Vervoid in a vegetarian restaurant. Beech meanwhile swarmed out of the room, obviously feeling proud that the event had just about scraped through within its budget.

Well, I suppose the question at the end of the day is, was the event worthwhile entertainment for just under twenty pounds? To keep it in perspective, it didn't really begin until two in the afternoon and continued until six. Deduct two hours for *Fenric* and half an hour for autographs and one is left with approximately an hour and a half of interviews. Quite simply, the amount of time was not enough in which to interview twelve people for whom most of the audience attended, especially considering that the video itself came out a week or two before the convention. The lack of a booklet, the lack-lustre displays and the dreary atmosphere just made the whole cake seem more past its sell-by date that it already was.

I enjoyed Panopticon X, but only because of the people I met there, and the same was true at Wolftime. When compared to the likes of the superb committee at Nebula, the DWAS seem to have been left behind, with old ideas and an inhuman committee who simply refuse to admit that occasionally they may well be getting it wrong.

Beech asked the audience in the queue as they left whether they would be attending Panopticon; many said yes, but I wonder how many will, considering A Day at the Forum received 400 applications and Wolftime only just squeezed through with 150. The Exec put this number down to the weather, etc., but it was well known that this was the number who had registered earlier.

To sum up, John Nathan-Turner said it all when he announced that *Fenric* had sold 9,000 copies in a week. What he could not understand was whether this record number of sales was because of McCoy's Doctor or the extended footage. Most of the audience had the sense to tell him that it was the latter, simply because most of them had it on video already. I would hope that the DWAS might take notice of this. In the current climate of recession, with no Doctor Who on TV, only the most original, friendly and value-for-money conventions will survive ...

MARK SHORT

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VANILLA ICE
Nope, he's not in The Frame either, but instead we have an interview with designer Barry Newbery, which includes many exclusive never-before-seen photos!

MC HAMMER
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The first story from which you became a regular viewer:

....

List, in order of preference, your fifteen all-time favourite stories (since Doctor Who is such a long-running series we will be using a proportional scoring system which requires that you vote **only** from the first story of a Doctor of whom you have seen **all** stories of - i.e. if you can recall all stories as far back as The Sea Devils then only vote from the first story of Tom Baker's era, Robot, onwards):

1st ....
2nd ....
3rd ....
4th ....
5th ....
6th ....
7th ....
8th ....
9th ....
10th ....
11th ....
12th ....
13th ....
14th ....
15th ....

Using the above system, list your seven least favourite stories:

1st ....
2nd ....
3rd ....
4th ....
5th ....
6th ....
7th ....

List your favourite and least favourite choices under each of the following categories:

	Favourite	Least Favourite
Doctor	....	....
Companion	....	....
Enemy	....	....
Writer	....	....
Director	....	....
Producer	....	....
Season	....	....

BLAKE's 7

List, in order of preference, your ten all-time favourite stories:

1st ....
2nd ....
3rd ....
4th ....
5th ....
6th ....
7th ....
8th ....
9th ....
10th ....

List your five least favourite stories:

1st ....
2nd ....
3rd ....
4th ....
5th ....

List your favourite and least favourite choices under each of the following categories:

	Favourite	Least Favourite
Regular character 1st	....	....
2nd	....	....
3rd	....	....
Regular male actor	....	....
Regular female actor	....	....
Guest artist	....	....
Alien	....	....
Writer	....	....
Director	....	....
Season	....	....

The Original STAR TREK

List, in order of preference, your twelve all-time favourite stories:

1st ....
2nd ....
3rd ....
4th ....
5th ....
6th ....
7th ....
8th ....
9th ....
10th ....
11th ....
12th ....

List your six least favourite stories:

1st ....
2nd ....
3rd ....
4th ....
5th ....
6th ....

List your favourite and least favourite choices under each of the following categories:

	Favourite	Least Favourite
Regular character 1st	....	....
2nd	....	....
3rd	....	....
Regular actor	....	....
Guest artist (male)	....	....
Guest artist (female)	....	....
Culture	....	....
Monster/villain	....	....
Episode title	....	....
Writer	....	....
Season	....	....

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